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Needle-Work.

THE subject of Needlework is one full of interest and importance, for not only does the story of the needle lead us through most varied and different times, but in following the history of work we follow also that of women and their condition from the beginning, and trace in a curious and unexpected manner the development of each period. All are familiar with the tale of Penelope, but some perhaps do not remember that in order to show the importance attached to work, Homer gives her no less a teacher in embroidery than Minerva herself. Then, on the other hand, as an example of the subjection of women at that time, there is a curious little episode in the "Odyssey," which perchance may not have been noticed. While the suitors are feasting below, and Penelope working with her maidens in an upper room of the Palace, the poet Phœmius sings the events of the Trojan War, and the sufferings of the Greeks, especially of Ulysses. Overcome with grief, Penelope descends to them, and begs him to cease a song which wrings her heart. Upon this, Telemachus, a boy of fifteen, rebukes his mother, tells her she must accustom herself to hear of the misfortunes of the Greeks which were caused by the gods, and then orders her to return to her apartment, to her work, and to her women, and to leave all speech to men and to himself, who alone can command in the family in his father's absence.

In as much as we look to poetry as one of the best records of education, we will give a short sketch from one of the most charming of the ancient Roman poets, Ovid, who in his

"Metamorphoses" gives us another instance of the respect in which needlework was held in those early times, by making the great goddess Minerva the heroine of it.

There was a young Lydian girl, daughter of a weaver, who was so skilled in the use of the shuttle and the needle that people came from afar to watch her at her work. She was known as Minerva's favourite pupil; yet instead of this pleasing her, she considered it an offence, and would not be indebted to any one for her talent. "I defy Minerva!" she said, "and will only bow to her when I find her superior to myself." One day whilst Arachne was sitting at her work, an old woman came up to her and chid her for her pride, advising her to implore the pardon of the goddess. This only increased Arachne's anger, and she challenged Minerva to a trial of skill. All at once the goddess stood before her, and the girl, still undaunted, bade her prove her superiority. The two rivals now set to work, each vieing with each other in vividly representing on their looms stories taken from the history of the gods. Arachne was acknowledged victorious by the bystanders, to the fury of Minerva, who vented her spite on her by destroying her work, and turning her into a spider.

This may seem but a trivial little tale, yet it serves to show that to excel in needlework in those days was not considered beneath the dignity of a goddess. How important is not every witness to the record of the feeling of past ages! Now embroidery can boast that it can show landmarks from the earliest times, for even when Moses and Homer wrote and sang, needlework was no new art. "The gods themselves were honoured by its service, and it preceded written history in recording heroic deeds and national triumphs." "The stuffs and fabrics of various materials of the Egyptians, Chinese, Syrians, and Chaldeans are named in the earliest records of the human race. How much these decorations depended on weaving, and how much on embroidery with the needle, is uncertain. The products of the Babylonian looms are alluded to in the book of Joshua. Their beauty tempted Achan to rescue them when Jericho fell, and Ezekiel speaks of the embroideries of Canneh, Haran and Eden, as well as of their cloths of purple and blue, and their chests of garments of divers colours." There is no national Jewish Art, it is only necessary to show their lack of original decorative knowledge to read the description of the Temple. The embroideries which have been mentioned by

different biblical writers appear to have been inspired by Persian influence. Yet notwithstanding the fact that the Jews possessed no particular Art of their own, Solomon extols amongst the highest qualities that he attributed to the "virtuous woman whose price is far above rubies," that "she worketh willingly with her hands, she layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry, her clothing is silk and purple."

It would seem that the needle is the symbol of the definition of the woman of antiquity: "she sits at home and spinneth wool."

To turn now to the Middle Ages; many proofs are given us of the important part which needlework played there. In the age of Chivalry, women began to occupy a higher position than they had hitherto done, in part brought about by Christianity, and in part by Germanic morals and customs. The emblems and scarfs worn by Knights going to the Crusades, or taking part in tournaments, were always embroidered by the hand of some fair lady to whom, in the language of the time, they had vowed allegiance. These tokens, which they called the "colours of their lady," were an incentive to deeds of prowess and valour, and were often the only favour accorded to the knight; but this gift was sufficient to call forth his devotions; he would live and die for it.

In those days needlework was the chief occupations of the women, who were left at home in the castles, while the men were away fighting in the Crusades for their king, or for private quarrels. Besides working tokens for their knights, they also embroidered hangings for their halls and reception-rooms, priests' vestments and altar-cloths. Very little of these remain to us, but, both in prose and verse, we read descriptions of beautiful work, either woven or embroidered, and the few specimens that remain point to England's not having been behindhand in an Art so much cultivated in other countries, more especially in Italy. We are told that "Innocent III. (1246), seeing certain copes and infulæ with desirable ophreys, was informed they were English work; he exclaimed, 'Surely England is a garden of delight', in sooth this is a well inexhaustible, and where there is so much abundance from thence much may be extracted.'"^{*}

An everlasting legacy of needlework of the Middle Ages is left

^{*} Lady Marian Alford, 'Needlework as Art.'

to us in the Bayeux Tapestry, formerly in the Cathedral of that town. Though some people nowadays consider that this work was done by the Empress Mathilda, and not by Mathilda wife of William the Conqueror, I do not think the evidence is sufficient to make it necessary for us to abandon the older and more popular belief. It is said that Mathilda, then Duchess of Normandy, had brought over pieces of linen cloth from Flanders, on which she depicted with her needle the exploits of Prince Harold, who was afterwards conquered and slain by her husband; at the time she began her work Harold was betrothed to one of her daughters. She further embroidered all the events which led to the invasion and conquest of England. These scenes are so faithfully represented, as regards the costumes, customs and ways of the period, that although the drawing is faulty, almost grotesque, and the colours nearly obliterated, historians find in it a supplement to national history. "We claim it as English, both on account of the reputed worker and the history it commemorates, though the childish style of which it is a type is inferior in every way to the beautiful specimens which have been rescued from tombs in Durham, Worcester, and elsewhere. They seem hardly to belong to the same period, so weak are the designs and composition of the groups." William of Poitou, Chaplain to William the Conqueror, relates that the "Normans were as much struck on the Conqueror's return to Normandy, with the splendid embroidered garments of the Saxon nobles as with the beauty of the Saxon youth."*

Otho, Bishop of Bayeux, brother to William the Conqueror, had the tapestries placed in the Cathedral for decoration, where they hung for centuries, the object of veneration and interest. For a short time Napoleon I. transported them to Paris at the time he projected the invasion of England, as if he sought a precedent to justify his own ambition in the success of the Norman conqueror. They are now preserved in the Library at Bayeux.

These tapestries are 20 inches wide and 227 feet long; they are worked in worsted on linen, the outlines are drawn with cords, and the surface is laid in in flat stitch. The faces, flesh, and naked limbs are only drawn in outline.

By the latter half of the seventeenth century life and habits had entirely changed; the great feudal Barons were things of the past, the châtelaines had become Court ladies. This change

* Lady Marian Alford, 'Needlework as Art.'

was especially marked in France under the influence of "le grand Roi," whose policy it was to attract the nobility to his Court and make Versailles the centre of learning, civilization, and fashion. The influence of Versailles spread far and wide. England was on the whole less infected by the spirit of imitation than other countries, and remained behind France at this time in refinement of manner, classical learning, and the outward varnish of civilization; whilst in Germany the Court of Versailles was abjectedly copied, even at the risk of losing their own nationality. A French writer gives us a charming example of how it was at his period in France, that a new phase of feminine development was begun, or, as he puts it, "ils ont réconcilié l'aiguille et les livres;" in a word, it is the beginning of the type of modern woman.

Madame de Maintenon, who founded the Institution of Saint Cyr, and who had so great an influence on the education of women of that day, is well known for the prominent place she gave to all intellectual culture, so much so, that it was at her request that Racine composed for the "Demoiselles de St. Cyr," "Esther" and "Athalie." Yet in a letter she personally addressed to a directress of this institution the following striking remarks are made: "Je suis ravie de ce que vous me mandez sur les travaux manuels des demoiselles. Ayez soin de les diversifier, afin qu'elles se lassent moins. Il faut passer du neuf au vieux, du beau au grossier, des habits au linge, aux bonnets, aux coiffes, afin qu'elles sachent un peu de tout. Vous qui êtes des mères prenez en les sentiments et apprenez leur un peu de chaque chose dans leur intérêt à elles, pour qu'elles se plaisent au travail. Comptez que c'est procurer un trésor à nos filles, que leur procurer ce goût, rien n'est plus nécessaire aux personnes de notre sexe que d'aimer le travail des mains." With all her love of art Madame de Maintenon wished to exclude art-work from her institutions, whilst Archbishop Fénelon, on the other hand, who was equally interested in the education of young girls, advised it strongly. "Je souhaite," he says, "pour les jeunes filles, des ouvrages où l'art assaisonne le travail de quelque plaisir. Ce sont pour elles comme des leçons de peinture et de dessin. En mêlant ces deux arts à leurs tapisseries, elles pourront faire des ouvrages d'une noble variété et d'une beauté qui serait au-dessus des caprices irréguliers de la mode."

It is strange the little influence that the Continental Art

exercised over English work of this period. In Italy it was the moment of the finest secular embroideries, also in Spain and Portugal, where the most splendid hangings, carpets, &c., adorned the palaces. "The fact is, that owing to our art-killing Protectionist laws, embroidery had the misfortune to be treated at that time as textile manufacture and not as Art at all." *

In the reign of William and Mary there was naturally a great leaning towards Dutch taste, and a Germanized "Louis Quatorze" style was imported into England by the Georges. It was rich and heavy, and not always appropriate to the use to which it was put. Through George III.'s reign, furniture was covered with embroideries done in different cushion stitches; "the designs were more or less wanting in grace, and their German feeling shows them to be the precursors of the Berlin-wool patterns."

When crewel-work ceased to be in vogue, needlework took another direction, and ladies imitated Indian patterns on muslin. In 1707 "the 'Broderers' Company,' we presume, found that the Indian manufactures were engrossing the market, and a fresh statute was obtained forbidding the importation from India of any wrought material. This cruel prohibition carried its own punishment. The Indian trade was ours, and we might have adapted and assimilated the Indian taste for design. We might have brought over men and women great in their most ancient craft, and so produced the most splendid Indo-English school. The Portuguese at least sent out their own silks and satins to be worked at Goa; we threw away our chance, and signed the death-warrant of our Art." †

The last attempt at excellence in English embroidery was due to a Mrs. Pawsey, who founded a school of needlework at Aylesbury, and was patronized by Queen Charlotte. She worked the beautiful hangings for a bed at Hampton Court. The execution is fine, and resembles some of the best French work of the same time. Mrs. Pawsey gave lessons to ladies in embroidery. After her came the total collapse of the art of decorative needlework, and the advent of the Berlin-wool work.

For many years this fashion prevailed, and seemed to satisfy the public taste. By degrees the wish for something better arose, and as a consequence of this desire for improvement in the taste of the day, the Royal School of Art-Needlework took

* Lady Marian Alford, 'Needlework as Art.'

† Ibid.

its rise, and tried to respond to that call by encouraging original ideas and designs, and imitating old ones in conformity with modern requirements.

I have taken the very greatest interest in this movement from the beginning, and will give a slight account of its working. I cannot do better than begin by quoting from Lady Marian Alford, whose assistance for many years was invaluable, and by whose death art in every branch has suffered so cruel a loss. "The difficulties to be overcome were at first very great. The old stitches had all to be learned and then to be taught, and the best method selected; the proper materials had to be studied and obtained, and sometimes they had to be manufactured. Lastly, beautiful tints had to be dyed, avoiding as much as possible the gaudy and evanescent. The project of such a school was first conceived in the autumn of 1872 by the Hon. Lady Welby."

She, herself an accomplished embroideress, courageously faced the difficulties of the undertaking. A small room was hired in Sloane Street, and Mrs. Dolby, who was a well-known authority on ecclesiastical needlework, gave her valuable assistance. About twenty ladies were chosen, and several friends joined to help in the movement.

The School grew fast, and the number of workers increased so much, that a bigger house was taken, and in 1875 it removed to its present quarters in Exhibition Road, South Kensington. The Queen became its Patron, and it had the title "Royal" affixed to it. In 1878 the Association was incorporated under the Board of Trade, with a Managing and Finance Committee and a salarized manager.

I must here say a word as to the lady who for years has held this post, and to whose untiring zeal, devotion, and ability the present success of the School is mainly due. In spite of immense difficulties and increasing anxiety, she has steered it safely through. Although we are dependent on the assistance of the public for the popularity of the School, we can claim for it the merit of having entirely reformed the taste in Art-needlework of this generation.

"The education of the School has been much assisted by the easy access to the fine collections of ancient embroideries in the Kensington Museum, and by the Loan Exhibition of Old Artistic Work, which was there organized in 1875 at the suggestion of H.R.H. Princess Christian, the President; and

since then there have been three very interesting Loan Exhibitions in the rooms of the Royal School. It was indeed necessary that acting members should avail themselves of every means of instruction in order to fit themselves for the task they had undertaken. They were expected at once to be competent to judge of all old work, to name its style and date, and even sometimes its market value. They were to be able to repair and add to all old work ; to know and teach every stitch, ancient and modern, and produce designs for any period, Gothic, Renaissance, Elizabethan, James I. or Queen Anne, besides contemporary European work ; all different, and each requiring separate study. . . .

"The earnest attempt to produce an artistic school of embroidery met with recognition and help from the highest authorities ; Sir Fred. Leighton gave permission for appeals to his judgment, Mr. Burne Jones, Mr. Morris, Mr. Walter Crane, Mr. Wade, &c., gave original designs." *

From 100 to 150 ladies have worked in the School at one time ; their claims were good birth, straitened means, and sufficient talent to enable them to learn themselves, and teach others. The numbers vary according to the orders received and the work required. I take this opportunity of reminding the public that their support is needed for the final practical success of the intention for which the School was started.

I feel as an English woman that this sketch of artistic needlework, slight as it is, would not be complete without some allusion to other work done at the present time by the women of England, Scotland, and Ireland. I will therefore try to trace the origin, and show how it is now naturalized amongst us. To begin with Irish lace, which is so well known and so popular nowadays. Before the eighteenth century, when it was encouraged from patriotism, it had been scarcely known. Dean Swift is said to have been one of the first to support the movement set on foot to bring it into notice, and he wrote a play which was acted for the benefit of the Irish lace-makers. This Irish work is, however, not strictly speaking lace, it is really more like embroidery on net, and worked in a frame. Some beautiful specimens imitated in Ireland from old Spanish, Italian, and Venetian point, are preserved in the South Kensington Museum. It is generally to French teaching that we must trace the most prominent and beautiful of the laces. The famous

* Lady Marian Alford, 'Needlework as Art.'

Youghal point shows this French origin by its marvellous resemblance to the point lace of Metz, which was the work and artistic creation of nuns of the fourteenth century.

The history of the first introduction of lace-making into the counties of Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, and Northamptonshire is uncertain. In the seventeenth century it was already flourishing. In France, Mary of Medicis is said to have been the first who introduced the art of working lace; but in England, as early as 1483, it was included in a list of articles prohibited from importation. Hence it had been made in this country before this date, for this prohibition was for the protection and encouragement of home manufactures. But as pins, which are indispensable in the process of lace-making, were unknown at that time, it is likely that the lace was coarse and inferior. The lace workers of Bedfordshire claim Queen Catherine of Arragon as the founder of their industry; she is supposed, while she lived at Amptill Park, to have spent her time in weaving bobbin-lace for the decoration of altars and trimming of priests' vestments, and with the help of her devout "waiting ladies" taught the art of pillow-lace to the neighbouring villagers. However this may be, we can certainly trace this art to French and Flemish immigrants, who took refuge in England from persecutions abroad. The distinguishing characteristic of Buckinghamshire lace is, that both foundation and pattern are woven simultaneously, the ground-work having the appearance of the finest net; it is called bobbin-lace, from the bobbins which are used for its manufacture; sometimes, in the wider lace, as many as 500 are in use. The pattern is pricked out on a parchment, and this is fastened on to a pillow, and the lace woven on it by means of pins round which the thread is twisted from the bobbins. Both parchments and bobbins frequently descend as heirlooms from mother to daughter in the lace-making families. The bobbins are very often both curious and quaint with texts, legends, and mottoes engraved on them. They are sometimes weighted with an antique coin or ornament. Fifty years ago lace-weaving was so flourishing an industry in these counties, that it was not unusual for a clever worker to earn £2 a week, and in consequence of the low farm wages it was found worth while for men to learn and take their turn at the work. From change of fashion, or some such cause, the making of real Buckinghamshire point almost became extinct, and was replaced by bad, cheap, and inferior Maltese and Yak.

Quite lately, however, within the last eight or ten years, the good old patterns have been recovered in some of these districts by a lady interested in this art and in its improvement, and many of the finest old designs have been reintroduced with great success, notwithstanding the great competition of the manufacture of cheap imitations.

Of the work which has been nationalized in Scotland, the most characteristic and interesting is that of the Shetland Isles. Lying far to the north of the most northern point of the British mainland, surrounded by some of the fiercest tide waves in the world, these islands were until this century comparatively unknown. Here the sheep, like everything else, show their Scandinavian descent. The fleece is a mixture of hair and wool; almost all shades of brown and grey are to be found, the most valued being a yellow brown, known as "Mourat." The wool is plucked off the sheep; if they were sheared, it would become gradually coarser, and lose greatly the velvety softness and gloss peculiar to Shetland wool. There is nothing cruel in this process, for it is done in June, when the sheep are changing their coats; it is carefully pulled off lock by lock. It was probably the fineness of the wool which gave a very early impulse to this industry. It is not known exactly at what date it began, but in the seventeenth century there was a great fair for the sale of knitted goods, on the yearly visit of the Dutch fishing fleet to Bressay Sound. Each district has its own speciality. In the Fair Isle, lying between Orkney and Shetland, articles of varied colours are made. One of the ships of the Spanish Armada was wrecked on this island, and it is believed that the Spaniards taught their hosts the patterns which are still in use, as many are of Moorish origin and identical with what are worn in the South of Spain. The dyes are all made from herbs and lichens, by the people themselves. The warm shawls and under-clothing, so invaluable on account of their extreme lightness and warmth, are made chiefly on the "mainland," as the largest island is called. The further North one goes, the finer the work becomes; it is in Uist, the most northern isle, that the most delicate shawls are made. These fairy webs are like the most delicate lace-work; it seems as if the nearer we approach the icy kingdoms of the North, the nearer the maidens resemble in their work that of the daughters of the Elf King, who, Hans Andersen tells us, wore shawls woven of "mist and moonshine."

The Shetland work is poorly paid; until the last few months

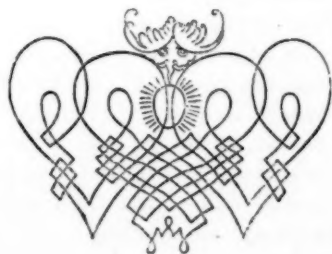
the payments have been on the truck system, which means payment "in kind;" but this is now illegal, and the traders cannot afford to give a price in money, "moderate as it is," equal to the value of meal and other articles, formerly given in exchange. All efforts to bring the workers into more direct communication with the buyers are useful, and to be encouraged, as by this means they will receive better pay, and the standard of work and wool is less likely to be lowered.

In this short sketch I have not touched on the subject of plain needlework, which has made such wonderful strides within the last few years, since its great importance has been realized. Till lately, England was far behind France and Germany in all its branches. In these countries it was always the custom to teach it scientifically in the schools, particularly in France, where the work taught in the convents is scarcely to be surpassed, and seems almost as a tradition handed down from ancient times. I am confident that England will in the end do even more than hold her own, seeing what enormous progress has been made since the conviction has made itself felt, that it was of national importance that plain work should be taught scientifically in the schools throughout the Kingdom.

I cannot do better than close these remarks with this passage from a French writer:—

"Cette petite tige d'acier, si mince, si fragile, de si peu de prix, a traversé des siècles dans la main des femmes, comme leur compagne fidèle; se proportionnant à tous les âges, s'accommodant à toutes les conditions, représentant enfin ce qu'il y a de plus sacré et de meilleur dans le monde avec l'affection: le travail!"

HELENA.



London Beautiful.



"AND Beauty's best in unregarded things," sings Mr. J. R. Lowell, in his new volume of 'Poems.' If this be true, the architectural and picturesque beauty of London must be "best" indeed. There is no more striking instance of the tendency of English people to depreciate their contemporary performances, than is afforded by their estimate of the architectural merits of modern London. Most Englishmen probably never give a thought to the subject; and, of those who pretend to some interest in such matters, the majority would unhesitatingly declare that London is a capital of singular meanness. But in his 'Walks in London,' Mr. Augustus J. C. Hare has admirably described its innumerable features of antiquarian and historical interest, and in his Preface, he, certainly no insular Britisher, boldly affirms, "in fact, if the capitals of Europe are considered, London is one of the most *picturesque*—far more so than Paris or Vienna; incomparably more so than St. Petersburg, Berlin, Dresden, Munich, Brussels or Madrid." I go further, and say that, notwithstanding the indifference of Government Departments, despite the errors of municipal and local authorities, and the blindness of the ordinary inhabitant, London for the last thirty years has in some fortuitous way been blundering into a new beauty and magnificence.

It is, in fact, architecturally, the most tantalising of towns. In no other great city can be found such close and glaring contrasts of splendour and squalor, of fine streets broken by some mean buildings, and of really beautiful prospects marred by some monstrous railway station or bridge. Its very vastness, too, does much to produce the general belief that it is an ugly town. Its greatest detractor would admit that there are in it many fine buildings, many fine groups of buildings, and even some handsome quarters; but he would say that they are separated from one another by masses of mean buildings, and by miles of

uninteresting thoroughfares, and that the effect of what is distinguished is lost in the more general and pervading mediocrity. No one could altogether deny that there is too much ground for such assertions. The British Museum and University College are fine buildings, but they can not redeem the ugliness of Bloomsbury, or expel Gower Street from memory. Introduce a stranger to London from the West—probably the best approach to it. With some complacency you will conduct him through Kensington, and even South Kensington; but you will hurry him apace through Knightsbridge or Brompton Road. He will see much that is charming in Chelsea, the Hospital, with all its gardens, the old Church, Cheyne Walk, the new Embankment; but I am afraid that even I cannot claim for its principal thoroughfare—the King's Road—distinction or picturesqueness. Or, take the most striking instance of all of what I mean—of the medley of the ugly and the beautiful in almost every London view. Show your stranger London from one of the Thames Bridges. There is much that is admirable, much that is most interesting and inspiring, but there are blots of incredible hideousness.

I cannot, therefore, in the least claim for London an ideal or even satisfactory measure of beauty. On the contrary, while I would contend that London is much more beautiful than most Englishmen think, while I would assert that London has become much more beautiful during the last thirty years, and is still growing in beauty, I wish in this article more particularly to insist that it ought to be made, and can be made, an infinitely more beautiful city. With this object, I will venture to submit some very commonplace and prosaic considerations and suggestions. I have no special architectural knowledge, and certainly not an artistic taste superior to that of my neighbours. But I think that this is not an inopportune time for any one, in however imperfect a manner, to try to excite amongst Londoners a warmer civic pride, and a new local patriotism.

First among the factors that might contribute to the beauty of a capital must be placed the Government of the country. But, in our land, and with our habits, the Executive Government can do but comparatively little to adorn London. The Board of Works is the handmaid of the Treasury. The Treasury is by the very reason of its existence bound to be parsimonious. The House of Commons alone can loosen its purse-strings, and at this moment prominent politicians on both sides of the House are competing in a wild race to a visionary economical goal. It

is vain to hope that larger sums will be voted for public works: but it would be well that a rational public opinion should declare itself against a reckless cutting down of the present average expenditure on necessary new national buildings. The Government, then, has the care of the Royal Parks, and is responsible for the erection of public buildings. Every one, I think, will agree that the London Parks are worthy of this capital, and that there has been a steadily increasing taste and skill devoted to their management. Each Park has its particular charms. Every one is familiar with the rhododendron display of May and June in the lawns on each side of Rotten Row, and with the perfect bedding-out by the walks that run parallel to Park Lane. But the quite recent developments of gardening in St. James's Park, though no less admirable, are much less observed. The ribbon borders of the shrubberies on the north side of the lake, and the mixed, wild borders to those on its south side are excellently managed; and it is pleasant to see that they are at their best, and that equal labour is bestowed upon them in the late summer months, when all the world is supposed to be out of town. There is one small, it may seem even a trivial, criticism on the laying out of the Parks, which has often occurred to me. Has there not been a curious fondness for putting up iron railings, unnecessarily massive in character, and of putting them where no necessity demands them? Let any one compare the appearance of the drive and footpaths, which run immediately to the south of the Albert Memorial, with the appearance of the continuation of this drive to the eastwards, after it has entered into Hyde Park. In the first portion, there is no delimitation by rails between the roadway and the footways, and, in consequence, there is an agreeable appearance of spaciousness. In the second portion the road is lined by heavy posts, and in effect it looks cramped and confined. It would certainly seem that no railings should be placed except where they were absolutely required, and that in those cases they should be as low and as light as possible.

It is, of course, mainly in the central, in the Governmental quarter of the town, that the State can, by the erection of fine Public Offices, do service to architecture. It so happens that in London in this quarter all the existing local conditions lend themselves to a really beautiful potential result. If Trafalgar Square has any pretensions to being "the finest site in Europe," there can be no doubt that the route from it to the Abbey and Palace

of Westminster might with ease be made the finest thoroughfare in Europe. The greater part of this roadway is at present of a dignified width, but there are narrow necks to it at each end. Conceive the whole length to possess the width which it now has at Whitehall. What could be finer than the prospect from Trafalgar Square? The land slopes just sufficiently. The towers of Westminster break and bound the view. On the right would be a succession of stately Public Offices. On the left, a greater variety of buildings would impart that irregularity which is so necessary to the picturesque of town views. Why should not the reverse prospect be equally fine? A transformed National Gallery is all that is needed. But is there any probability of anything like this dream being ever realized? It is difficult to answer the question with any certainty. The mind of Parliament changes from year to year. Years ago it was decided to rebuild the National Gallery. A competition was held; prizes awarded; national money spent to secure a worthy design, and then the project was abandoned apparently for ever. Much the same thing happens at the Westminster end of Whitehall. It is intended to build Public Offices between the Home Office and Westminster, and to widen Parliament Street. A site is purchased for this object, houses are demolished, the site lies idle and empty for years, and now apparently it is settled that public offices shall not there be built, but that the ground shall be used by a Public Company. However, it is satisfactory to know that one of the terms imposed upon its user is the widening of Parliament Street. There has been a still more recent instance of Parliamentary infirmity of purpose towards this part of London. By Mr. Gladstone's last Administration it was decided to build new War and Admiralty Offices, partly on the site of the present Admiralty, which was to be pulled down, and partly on the lands to the north and west of it. Again a competition is held, a design is selected, prizes are awarded, sites are taken possession of, houses are demolished. And, again, there comes into office a new Administration. Lord Randolph Churchill develops his passion for economy. Fresh Parliamentary Committees sit, the whole design is abandoned, and an entirely different one is recommended for adoption. It would seem that there is now no intention of building a new War Office; and the former scheme has shrunk into a modest design for extending the present Admiralty on the site of its gardens and of the

old Whitehall Gardens. The architectural plans for these buildings are now on view in the tea-room of the House of Commons. The architects' object is plainly to perpetuate the general character and main features of the Admiralty, and so far as may without presumption hazard an opinion upon the design, I should say that they will produce buildings, sensible in arrangement, simple and solid in effect, which are congruous with the adjoining buildings, and not overpowering to the Horse Guards. There is, amongst the plans, a drawing of the whole line of Public Offices as seen from St. James's Park. The proposed designs will undoubtedly add much to the general effectiveness of this view. But, on the other hand, it cannot be said that they will give to London a new building truly magnificent or beautiful, and on such a site one may sigh for even one tower to correspond with the not very imposing tower of the Foreign Office. There are two incidental advantages, however, in the abandonment of the former project of building the War Office as well as the Admiralty on this site. It will now be possible, as I presume, at some future time to widen the descent from Trafalgar Square. And it would seem to be a part of the present plan that the long-thought-of extension of the Mall into Charing Cross shall be carried out.

It would be unjust, (as I have already suggested), to blame the Office of Works or successive First Commissioners for all these absurd tergiversations. The fault is entirely with the House of Commons, and with the apathy of the public. But there are some much smaller matters, for which I think that office may fairly be called to account. He is a bold man who would ever propose the erection of a new statue in London. But such proposals are periodically made, and carried into effect. It does, therefore, seem strange that for years there should have stood in Trafalgar Square pedestals unoccupied and useless. The Whitehall façade of the Home Office presents a curious example of incompleteness. Its centre is crowned with statuary; but the two ends, which were obviously left waiting for their corresponding decoration, still remain unfinished. Who could have been responsible for the hideous shed by the side of the entrance to Westminster Hall, which leans against the additions to the Hall, and which would disgrace a country station on a branch line? Notwithstanding the censures of Mr. Cremer and Sir George Campbell, Mr. Pearson's restoration of the Western front of the Hall promises to be worthy of his high reputation, and to be

likely to add to the dignity of the most interesting group of buildings in London. Is it visionary to dream that at some future day the houses to the south-east of the Abbey may be swept away, and that the scheme of a cloistered resting-place for the monuments of great men, which I believe was actually projected when it was rendered abortive by the Crimean War, shall be in fact carried out?

I have said that it is in the central quarter of the town that Government Buildings must necessarily be mainly found. But there are two other very dissimilar quarters, which have been appropriated to groups of public or quasi-public buildings. At South Kensington, the Museum, and the conveniently adjoining estate of the Commissioners of the 1851 Exhibition, are gradually attracting to that quarter Institution after Institution. It is premature to say what will be the final architectural effect. But, even now, this district has an architectural character of its own, and has introduced into London the employment on a large scale of terra-cotta, which in itself is a noteworthy innovation. The second non-political quarter is that of the Royal Courts of Justice. Wherever a great and imposing building is planted, it not only is in itself an oasis in the wilderness of brick and mortar, but it has the happy quality of gradually carrying some sort of beauty or decency into adjoining sites. It is unnecessary to debate the much-vexed question of the architectural merits of the new Law Courts. Probably most people will admit that there is a sombre dignity and impressiveness in their Strand front. At least they have swept away a mass of mean dwellings, and now, with Lincoln's Inn to the north, and the Temple to the south, there is interjected into this portion of London a whole district of notable interest. The Benchers of Lincoln's Inn in their rebuilding seem to be proceeding on a definite plan, and in an appropriate style. It is impossible to say this of the Benchers of the two Temples. Each one of their new buildings is utterly unlike any preceding one, and there is but scant attempt made to preserve the character of the old buildings. But even these modern builders cannot destroy the charm of the Temple, to which the Embankment has certainly given new delights. Every one knows how wisely and kindly the Benchers throw open their gardens on summer evenings to hundreds of poor children. The wondering enjoyment of the grass by these little ones proves how much public gardens in the middle of London are needed and would.

be appreciated. To the west of the new Law Courts lies a good space of vacant land. I believe it is intended to build upon it some new Courts; but in the meanwhile, and for years past, a trifling expenditure of money would have converted it from an eyesore into a convenient resting-place. Before passing from the subject of Government Buildings, it is right to express the hope that a fitting home may soon be found for the National Portraits Collection. It is shameful that it should be banished to Bethnal Green for an indefinite term. It would be surely not difficult to find a suitable site close to the National Gallery.

And now to proceed to what has been, and what might be, done for the adornment of London by the local governing bodies. The Metropolitan Board of Works has, at the moment, few friends. "It will cease to exist," said Mr. Ritchie with cruel succinctness, in his speech in introducing the Local Government Bill, and no murmurs of discontent greeted its death sentence. I for my part am as glad as any one can be that a directly elected body will take its place. But it would be monstrous ingratitude to forget the amount of good work which the Board has done. Compare the London of to-day with the London of 1860, and some large portion of the improvements effected in that period is directly due to the action of the Metropolitan Board. The Victoria Embankment alone has made a revolution in the appearance of London. On the whole, that great work was conceived and executed in a worthy fashion. But, even in it, there are some blemishes. How infinitely finer would have been the effect of its Westminster end, if St. Stephen's Club had been set back so as to allow the whole height of the Clock Tower to be seen from Charing-cross! It is stupid that at the end of Norfolk Street, the broadest street that issues from the Strand southwards, the view of the river should have been obstructed by the Temple Station of the District Railway. It may also legitimately be complained that the course of Northumberland Avenue was not planned to run from the centre of the Nelson Column to the open river, and that buildings should have been erected on both its sides so disproportionately high for its breadth. Financial considerations have, no doubt, been accountable for these artistic mistakes. But, in the general laying out of the new streets, which the Board has made, I think there has been an inexcusable indifference to the presence of awkward and unsightly angles and curves, and no sufficient attempt made to create symmetrical places, or graceful effects.

Take two glaring examples of this. What can be more formless than the open space into which Piccadilly Circus has found itself casually enlarged? Drive down the new street on the north of the National Gallery. There were—nay, there still are—great possibilities of a very striking town view. But, at present, there stands in an island all alone a hideous little public-house, which, while it stands, must prevent any really handsome treatment of the streets that there converge. Then the gaunt back of the National Gallery is revealed in all its ugliness; and, opposite to St. Martin's Church, its bare walls are again seen, with a space left between them and the roadway, which ought either to be thrown open and planted, or, if possible, with the space to the north of the Gallery, to be used for new Galleries, having handsome elevations.

The Corporation of the City of London has taken its due share in that almost universal reconstruction and adornment of the City which has been in progress during the last thirty years. Even a monomaniacal enemy of the Corporation, such as Mr. Firth, must admit that in their street improvements and in their new markets, in their additions to the Guildhall, and in their acquisition of open-spaces for the public, they have shown a proper municipal sense of responsibility, and discharged with some taste and skill their public duties.

The Vestries and Local Boards have not the power to do much to beautify or disfigure their several districts. But, as a further illustration of the general growth of taste, the last built Vestry and Town Halls, such as those of Westminster, Kensington, and Chelsea, may usefully be compared with other buildings of the same class. And, more particularly am I bound to point to the Chelsea Town Hall as an admirable example of modern architecture. The architect has succeeded in producing a building which retains some local character, and which at the same time is handsome and convenient. It is earnestly to be hoped that the new district Councils, which will in the future supplement the County Council of London, may be made as much as possible conterminous with natural areas, in which there is already existing some coherent local life and spirit. Amongst the causes which have contributed to the local lethargy of Londoners, I count the artificiality and size of the old political divisions, which did not, moreover, correspond with the local-government areas, but largely exceeded them in size. The last Redistribution Bill, by, as a general rule, making the

Parliamentary Division coincide with the Vestry area, has enormously stimulated local political life in London. I am convinced that to make the new local Bodies efficient, they must rule over small areas, which, so far as may be practicable, should coincide with political areas.

If a foreign student of English habits were asked what amongst private factors had contributed most to the adornment of London, he might on *à priori* grounds be well justified in answering—"the gentry by their private houses." He would know how this class has covered England with delightful homes, how they have surrounded their country houses with woods and gardens the most charming in the world. In building the smallest cottage on his estate, the country gentleman will give some thought to its external appearance, and in the making of any new road, or the planting of any young hedge, he will be careful of the amenities. But the foreigner would be wrong. The English gentleman in London is careless of all these things. Considering the wealth that has been accumulated by individuals during this reign, it is surprising that so few new private houses of a distinct form, and standing by themselves, have risen in London. In the vast majority of cases the intending occupant of a London house is content to surrender himself to the architectural mercies of the builder; and the builder, until recently, has apparently thought that if he covered the fronts of his houses with stucco, and affixed to them a portico and a balcony, he had fulfilled his whole duty to the Graces. I suppose that it is partly because English gentlemen have had such pleasant houses in the country, and because they have looked upon them as their homes, that they have been indifferent to the houses of the despised London, in which they have merely sojourned for a time. But, for the large class of professional and business men, who cannot pretend to be country gentlemen, it is really curious that long ago it was not worth the while of a clever builder to supply houses of greater architectural merit. It may be that the leasehold system has had something to do with the general absence of pride in the particular house occupied. But if the leasehold system has had this one bad architectural effect, it must be remembered that on the other hand it enables a public-spirited landowner to execute large and well-considered improvements on his estate, such as those which have been made on the Grosvenor and Cadogan estates, and which would never have been practicable under a general system of freeholds.

However, though, as I have said, the hypothetical foreigner would have been wrong in his surmise, there has been a gradual increase in the amenity of the residential quarters of London. Tyburnia is less depressing than Bloomsbury. Mayfair and Belgravia are more cheerful than Tennyson's "long unlovely street." South Kensington is again more attractive structurally. And, without doubt, the red-brick houses characteristic of the Cadogan Square district, and which are sporadically rising in other parts of the town, are the best examples we have of private-house architecture. They are good in colour, in material, and generally in outline ; but are not their architects sometimes tempted to seek after the quaint or unusual too much, and to reproduce features of a previous style, which are not in themselves worth reproduction ? The Square gardens have done much to redeem from gloom and ugliness the residential districts. And in the arrangement of such gardens there has been an improvement in the plan, which is common between Gloucester Road and Earl's Court Road, where, very generally, the houses open directly upon the garden at their backs, and where the occupants of the back rooms are not obliged to look only upon the old-fashioned lines of leads, and then of stables, and then of leads again.

But the prime movement in the modern adornment of London has not come from the private householder. It is in street architecture that such gigantic steps in advance have been taken of late years. First the Clubs, then Banks and Insurance Offices, erected for themselves handsome premises ; hotels, great shops, the offices of Limited Companies followed the example, and now there is not a street in the City which is not almost entirely composed of modern buildings, massive and ornate. All the most important streets in London are being similarly reconstructed. Of course, some of this new building is of spurious art, and of questionable taste. But in it all there is a striving after effect. The effect may be bad ; but surely it is better that the unsuccessful attempt should be made, than that owner, builder, and architect should think that no attempt at all was necessary. If ignorance could give excuse to presumption, I should like to indicate these general maxims for street architecture in this smoky atmosphere. Small or elaborate ornamentation is wasted ; bold roof lines and broken façades, which will give light and shade, are desirable. Recesses, projections, balconies, aid the perspective effect, which in a street view is at least as important as the effect from the

front. Too frequently one sees an ambitious façade of a lofty building, whose sides in blank brick are allowed to overtop adjoining houses, and to be seen standing out uglily through a length of street. Absolute uniformity of style is certainly not requisite ; but there should be some regard for congruity. There are in many of the City streets the most clashing juxtapositions of the most dissimilar styles. However admirable may be the Constitutional Club in Northumberland Avenue, it is singularly inappositely placed amidst its stone-built neighbours. However, to repeat, the most unobservant of men cannot pass through any important street of Central and Western London without being struck by the quantity of new buildings, and, on the whole, with their great architectural superiority to the buildings on whose sites they stand.

But London is not composed of the Central or Western districts alone, and an infinitely larger population dwells in bye-streets than in the main thoroughfares. Is any new beauty relieving the squalid monotony of the vast poorer districts in the East and the South? In all attempts to mitigate the meanness of these quarters, philanthropy comes to the aid of any merely æsthetic feelings, and serious statesmen should co-operate with artistic sentimentalists. Something has been effected. Under the provisions of Torrens' Act, some of the most disgraceful tenements have been improved. Under the several Artizans' and Labourers' Acts whole "rookeries" in certain districts have been swept away. In their place, and, in other sites, great blocks of Industrial Dwellings have been erected by the Peabody Trustees, by Sir Sydney Waterlow's, and other similar Companies. They are substantial and healthy ; they are, I believe, eagerly sought for by tenants of a class of larger means than that for which they were intended. But they are, as a rule, barrack-like erections. Height, I suppose, is inevitable, and every inch of space must be made available. But might not grass sometimes take the place of asphalt in the court-yards that are between the blocks, and might not trees always be planted in them? The Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes recommended the removal of the prisons, occupying sites in the most populous districts, to suburban, and less-crowded positions, and that the disused sites should be "used for workmen's dwellings and for open spaces connected therewith." It was in the mind of Lord Salisbury at all events that the Government should not avail itself of the increment which had

occurred in the value of these sites since their original acquisition, and that they should be disposed of for this philanthropic purpose at less than their present market-value. But Parliament would not sanction such an economical heresy, and in the Act which was passed in pursuance of the Report of this Commission, it was provided that these sites should be offered to the Metropolitan Board of Works to be purchased by them at a fair market value, and then, presumably, to be devoted by the Board to the erection of workmen's dwellings. The consequence of this provision has been that as yet the intentions of the Commissioners have been defeated. Coldbath Fields Prison was offered to the Metropolitan Board, who found it impossible to give what was considered to be a fair price, and that site is now to be used for Post Office buildings. Millbank Penitentiary will be removed in the course of this year. The moribund Board will certainly not be willing to purchase the site. It is, unfortunately, of considerable value. But, it is possible that a combination of wealthy philanthropists might acquire at least some portion of it, and in the words of the Report use it for "workmen's dwellings and open spaces connected therewith." It would be, indeed, of excellent example if a workmen's estate could be laid out with something approaching to that allowance of garden ground, which is common in the West-end. It is obvious, that it is not from the houses themselves of the poorer districts that any beauty can be obtained. It is also obvious, that, as a rule, no private gardens can be attached to them. These facts make the efforts of such Societies as the Kyrle and the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association to multiply public gardens and playgrounds all the more practically valuable. It is well to remember that while in the Western district there is one acre of open space for every 684 persons; in the East there is but one acre for every 7000 persons; and in the S.E. district within the four-mile circle there are only 100 acres of open ground. Any acre added to this meagre space is of great value. During its existence the Metropolitan Gardens Association has thrown open thirty-six gardens and ten playgrounds, containing an aggregate area of fifty-four acres. The Kyrle Society (amongst its other good works) has been engaged also in this task of increasing the number of public open spaces, and will shortly open as a garden for the people a piece of land in a crowded district in Southwark, which the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have leased to trustees nominated by the Society.

The work done here seems to me so good an example of the methods of this Society that it may be permissible to quote the description of it given in their annual Report for 1887. "The garden is in Red Cross Street, and faces nine blocks of new dwellings inhabited by working people. . . . There was originally no ground attached to these blocks, but now the children will have only to cross the road to find a playground, where they can play almost under their mothers' eyes. The men can turn out on summer evenings and smoke their pipes under the trees opposite their houses, and women can sit out there at work. . . . The space is small, and is divided into a small playground for young children, and a garden, which although not big enough for exercise for men, forms a splendid outdoor sitting-room. A covered space, with a drinking fountain at one end, has been arranged and paved with brick, so that children will be able to play in wet weather. The roof to this playground is reached by a broad flight of low steps, and forms a raised terrace overlooking the garden, where seats will be placed, and refreshments will be sold, and it is hoped that summer evening concerts for the enjoyment of the persons living in the narrow courts around may often be provided." But there is plenty of work for both these Societies still to do. There are even now one hundred and ninety-seven disused burial-grounds closed to the public, which might all be converted into gardens for the people.

Whether the new Local Government for London will produce, in practice, all these good results which some enthusiasts expect, is debateable. But it is a truism to say that the keener the local patriotism of Londoners, the better will be the class of men, who will give up time to the local administration of its affairs. I think that London is even now worthy of our pride. I think it ought to be made much more worthy, and that every Londoner should not only be careful of the architectural magnificence of its central parts, but also zealous to impart a new comeliness and comfort to its poorer districts. Every year a larger number of our Colonists, and of our American kinsfolk, flock to this—their Mother City. Let them take away an impression not only of its gloomy vastness—not only of its growing beauty and charm, but also the conviction that in this unparalleled aggregation of masses of the very poor, and of the very rich, the latter are sensible of their duties to the former, and are in fact performing them.

C. A. WHITMORE.

The Great Western Railway.

It would be more than a mere fanciful conceit, if we were to compare the great "battle of the gauges," which raged with such fury more than forty years ago, to the yet more ancient strife between the Britons and the English. Like the Britons, the champions of the broad-gauge under the leadership of their King Arthur, Isambard Kingdom Brunel, performed prodigies of skill and valour; like them, they have been worsted in the struggle; like them, they have retired, defeated but not disgraced, to Cornwall, where they have hitherto been left in almost undisputed possession. But though now-a-days the fact may be well-nigh forgotten, at one time the victory was trembling in the balance. Not only to Exeter and Plymouth, but to Hereford and Wolverhampton, to Milford and to Weymouth, the broad-gauge metals ran; even in the Metropolis itself Moorgate Street and Victoria were broad-gauge outposts. We might indeed carry our simile further, and draw a comparison between the infusion of British blood, deepening as we pass westward through Somerset into Devon, and on through Devon to Cornwall, and the proportion which the broad-gauge traffic bears to the narrow at the present day over the different sections of the Great Western as we journey further and further west from London. Or again, we might point out that, just as the invading English were wont to seize and fortify positions on the coast of their enemy's country, so the narrow-gauge Bodmin and Wadebridge, that for over half a century has remained contentedly isolated from all its neighbours, was one of the very earliest railways in England; and that even the West Cornwall, originally narrow-gauge, and the solitary example of a line once narrow which has since been adapted to broad-gauge, ran from sea to sea, from Hayle on the north coast, through Camborne and Redruth, to Newham on the Fal River below Truro, years before ever

Brunel had spanned the Tamar with the wondrous arches of Saltash Bridge.

But whatever the broad-gauge may have in common with the Britons of old, it at least does not share the alleged distinction of their modern representatives, who know not when they are beaten. For now well-nigh a quarter of a century the Great Western authorities have realized that further strife is hopeless, that the broad-gauge has been defeated not so much by its own inherent inferiority as by the overwhelming numbers of its opponents. To drop metaphor altogether and come to the plainest of plain prose, in the fierce conflict for competitive traffic—and there is but little traffic in England that is not competitive either with sea carriage or another railway route—a line that was handicapped by a different, though it might be a better, gauge could never hold its own. Accordingly, bit by bit, first in the Midlands and to the North, next in the West and in Wales, then in Dorset, and Wilts and Somerset, the broad-gauge has been abandoned. To-day out of nearly 2500 miles of line only 426 is broad-gauge at all, and of this all but 163 is available for narrow-gauge traffic as well. Out of over a hundred trains that leave Paddington or its adjacent goods yards every day, only ten—seven passenger and three goods—run on the broad-gauge metals.

Still as long as the line between Exeter and Truro is broad-gauge only, the through traffic for the West must be conveyed in broad-gauge vehicles. When the final change comes, and the lines in Cornwall and South Devon become narrow-gauge like the rest, there must of course be a very considerable sacrifice of broad-gauge stock. But at least every effort has been made that the sacrifice shall be as small as possible. For years no new broad-gauge carriage or broad-gauge engine has been built. The new carriages that are required from time to time, are now all constructed with bodies of the ordinary width, so that at any time they can be lifted off their present broad-gauge under-frames and put upon narrow-gauge ones. Yet more ingenious—the new engines are convertible. At present they are what is known as “inside framed;” in other words, the axle-boxes are between the wheels. If, some fine morning the *fiat* goes forth from Paddington that the broad-gauge is to follow the atmospheric principle into the limbo, to which are consigned inventions that, though a scientific success, are yet a commercial failure—and if the present depression of trade really

does pass away, the *fiat* may come sooner than it is looked for—these engines need only retire for a day or two to the Swindon shops. The outside coverings of the wheels will disappear, the wheels will be knocked off the axles, the axles themselves cut short, and then, with the wheels refixed inside instead of outside the bearings on which they are supported, they will issue forth again as full-blown narrow-gauge engines. Another instance, in which the coming event is already casting a distinct shadow before, is to be found in Cornwall, where, out of the forty-one viaducts in the 80 miles between Penzance and Plymouth, no less than eighteen have been reconstructed in the last few years. The old ones had room only for a single broad-gauge line, the new ones are built of the standard width for two lines of the narrow-gauge. The new branches too are narrow-gauge only, even when they branch off from a purely broad-gauge line.

Twenty years back the Great Western and its allies had upwards of 700 broad-gauge engines running. To-day, though the mileage has doubled in the interval, the number has shrunk to 200. But no traveller on the line, unless perhaps he should happen to be also a shareholder, will see without a pang the stately "Iron Duke," the wandering "Tartar," or the swift-flying "Swallow," disappear from the road that has known them for forty years. No engines in the world have so long and as famous a history as these old engines of Sir Daniel Gooch. Save that they have lost the sentry box at the back of the tender, from which the guard used to keep watch to see that his train was duly following, they look to-day, with their great 8-feet driving-wheel, and their old-world brass dome and brass wheel-covers, just as they must have looked forty years ago, when our fathers gaped open-mouthed at the tale of their achievements. And indeed their achievements were, in sober earnest, remarkable enough. The Great Western had from the beginning prided itself upon its passenger service. In the words of a historian of the line who wrote in 1845, it was remarkable "for the great proportion of first-class intermediate traffic, and of persons travelling upon the line with their private carriages;" at Slough, in particular, "the greater part of the traffic was of a very high description." An accompanying plate accordingly gives us a picture of a train, at the tail of which is attached a hooded phaeton mounted upon a carriage truck. The back of the phaeton is turned towards the engine, so that we are per-

mitted to see the faces of a lady and gentleman "of the first quality" who are seated in it.

Naturally, however, travellers of this "very high description" needed corresponding accommodation. "To suit this traffic," not only were "the dimensions of the stations"—Slough for instance, which was pulled down five years since as utterly mean and inadequate—"spacious and the interior fittings handsome, with a magnificent hotel," but the carriages were more roomy and more solidly built. Larger and heavier carriages meant larger and more powerful engines; and so, while the London and Birmingham was contented with four-wheeled engines, none of the Great Western engines ever had less than six. The "North Star," which, when placed upon the road, then only open as far as Maidenhead, in 1839, "attained a velocity of 37 miles an hour," and thereby earned for itself a place in Haydn's 'Dictionary of Dates,' where its name remains unto this day, may still be seen in the shops at Swindon. Its most remarkable external feature is the huge brass dome, which, in shape like a garden hand-light, is wide enough to cover the whole breadth of the boiler.

But the "North Star" soon "gan to pale its ineffectual fires." Eight years later the battle of the gauges was raging, and Sir Daniel Gooch's great 8-foot engines were placed upon the road to show what the broad-gauge could do. "The express"—we quote from Mr. Foxwell, whose accuracy is beyond question—"was timed to *leave* Didcot (it stopped there) 57 minutes after departing from Paddington; and the distance, 53 miles, was repeatedly run in from 47½ to 50 minutes." But this was not enough; and the tradition still lingers at Paddington, where we heard it from the lips of the general manager, that a driver solemnly submitted to the directors a proposal that, if they would look after his wife and family, he would take his engine to Bristol (118½ miles) *within the hour*. But the directors, alas! felt it their duty to decline the proposition, and now that railway management has grown old and staid, and that loco-Superintendents shake their heads at a mere 70 or 75 miles an hour as "too fast," we shall never know what a broad-gauge engine could do. Still the "Lord of the Isles," which was exhibited at the Great Exhibition of 1851, and now, after running 700,000 miles, rests from its labours in the shops at Swindon (where the present writer saw it a few weeks back rising majestically from a heap of old lanterns that "deformed its nether parts"),

on one occasion brought a train over the $77\frac{1}{4}$ miles from Swindon to London in 72 minutes. We tell the tale on the authority of an inspector, who was himself in charge of the train as guard. It was therefore his duty to record the time accurately, and once having recorded the performance, he might be trusted, one would think, not to forget it subsequently.

The question, "How fast can a locomotive run?" has been recently discussed in the engineering papers. The conclusion appears to be that there is no authentic record of any speed above 80 miles an hour. That speed was obtained many years ago, by a Bristol and Exeter tank-engine with 9-foot driving-wheels—a long extinct species—down a steep bank. But it has never been beaten. In the course of the discussion, however, it was stated that the Great Western expresses, which are allowed 87 minutes for the $77\frac{1}{4}$ miles between Paddington and Swindon, had a difficulty in keeping time on the down journey; while coming up, as a rule, they had a good deal in hand. Knowing that between Paddington and Didcot the rise is only 1 in 1320, or, in other words, 4 feet in a mile, and that even from Didcot to Swindon it is only 1 in 660; knowing, too, that the trains are timed in the working books at the same speed throughout, both up and down, we had a difficulty in believing this statement. So we applied to the authorities, and obtained leave to go down to Swindon and back on the engine of the "Dutchman," and see for ourselves. Incidentally this enabled us to accomplish the fastest piece of advertised travelling in the world. We were timed to leave Paddington at 11.45 and to be back at 2.45. In fact we left at 11.46 and got back at 2.43, having travelled $154\frac{1}{2}$ miles—to say nothing of a five minutes' interval for refreshments—in the 177 minutes.

Our first question to the driver was, whether it was true that the down journey was harder than the up? "Certainly," he replied, "there was a great difference." So we explained that on this particular occasion, if he did not keep time, we should miss the up train at Swindon, and thus have our run for nothing. There was no fear of that, he thought, and off we set. But, as already said, we were a minute late of starting; the broad-gauge carriages are heavy—20 tons apiece or thereabouts—and we had one more than usual on; then the old broad-gauge engines have not, like a modern Midland or Great Northern engine, much spare power to come and go upon, and

take a long time to get up speed ; and besides, there was a fresh breeze blowing from the south-west across our track ; so in the result we reached Slough at 12.11, three minutes late. Half of our six minutes' "law" was gone, and we had not covered a quarter of the distance. Anxiously, we looked at our watch ; the driver caught the gesture, and asked the time. A colloquy with the fireman was the result, the shovel was plied somewhat brisker than before, and the miles that hitherto had taken 65 and 66 seconds apiece, were reeled off in 60 and 61. As we ran through the deep Sonning cutting, the speed rose at once, only to fall again as we came out to meet the full force of the gale on the embankment before Reading. "Hold tight through the yard," cries the fireman, and with a jerk here and a bump there, we are over the maze of points and crossings, and in a minute more we bend round to the right, and are off to the north before the wind. We reach Didcot at 12.45, sharp to time, having regained our three minutes, and done the $34\frac{1}{2}$ miles in 34 minutes.

The fireman now thought he could afford time for a drink of cold tea, and even the driver seemed satisfied. But though we had 3 minutes in hand, 27 minutes for 24 miles, the gradient was somewhat steeper, and the country more exposed, so it was not yet time to give the shovel a rest. We sped on in silence to within a mile or two of Swindon, when the driver said : "If you hadn't been here, I should have been five minutes late into Swindon this morning, and have saved five or six hundred-weight of coal. We might have picked up two minutes the other side down the bank to Bath, and another two minutes between Bath and Bristol ; and no one would have said anything if we were a minute late at Bristol." With deep regret we heard that we had spoiled his average ; we could only suggest that it was the extra coach rather than the extra passenger that was really to blame.

It should be explained that all the drivers doing the same class of work, working, for instance, the broad-gauge expresses between London and Swindon, are formed into one corps technically known as a "link." Every pound of coal and every pint of oil that goes on to each man's engine is debited to him, and at the end of the week the total is made up and divided by the number of miles his engine has run. The men are then arranged in order of merit, that is, of economy of fuel and oil consumption, on a sheet hung up on the notice-board of the

running shed. Of course for a single week, extra load or stress of wind, greasy rails or what not, may affect a man's position, but in the long run (assuming every man's engine to be in equally good condition) the man, who comes out top is the best driver, in other words, is the man who can do his work to time—for punctuality of course comes before coal saving—with the most scientific economy of force. In fact, a driver feels the loss of a good position on the coal-sheet, much as a boy feels being sent to the bottom of his form at school.

We must not stay to describe our return journey. We soon felt, however, the difference between up hill and down hill, which was almost as marked as the difference between rowing up stream and down stream. Now the engine seemed to run almost of itself. Calmly conscious of the strength of his position, the driver remarked, as we ran through Didcot a minute late, that he never needed to trouble to be in time at Didcot. From start to finish the door of the fire-box was wide open, and after we passed Reading it hardly received a hundredweight of coal. By the journey's end, when the engine had finished its day's work, the fire was burnt right down to the bare bars, and yet the gauge showed no diminution of steam pressure,—the perfection of good stoking. But even without coal, nothing except the brakes could keep us from running over 60 miles an hour; 57 sec., 56½, 57, 58, was the record of the chronograph for mile after mile. At Slough we were three minutes too soon, and the signalman was not ready for us, and it was a sight to see how in an instant the nonchalance of driver and fireman changed to disciplined activity as they caught the first glimpse of the distant signal at "danger." However, before the speed of the train had been more than slightly checked, the signal dropped, and through we swept, and even a second check at Langley did not prevent us from reaching Paddington two minutes too soon. We flattered ourselves as we alighted that there were not many other people who had ever got back to London from Wiltshire in less than three hours; but it was nearer three days than three hours before our face resumed its pristine cleanliness.

But at Swindon we have only stepped on to the threshold of the Great Western system, and our time is short; let us push boldly forward not only to Bristol, but on over the second hundred miles of level line that leads us from the muddy banks of the Avon, across Axe and Exe and Parret, round or through the warm red cliffs of the Dawlish coast, an English Riviera on

a small scale, alongside of the yet more muddy waters of the Teign, till we finally pause at Newton Abbot, at the foot of the southern slopes of Dartmoor. Here the character of the railway changes with an abruptness that is nothing short of startling. Hitherto the "ruling gradient," as the engineers call it, has been 1 in many hundreds, and for mile after mile the line has run as straight as an arrow. The next stage is an incline of 1 in 40, and henceforward along the whole hundred and odd miles westward to the Land's End there is nothing but climbing hills, only to hurry down again on the further side, swinging round sharp curves now to right and now to left, rattling through tunnels and ringing over viaducts; till at length in its last moments old and long-forgotten habits reassert their sway, and falling abruptly from the high ground at St. Erth, the line runs meekly over some four miles of level marshes into Penzance Station. But as yet we have got no further west than Newton.

As a sign of what is coming, the engine that has brought us from Bristol here leaves us. It is very doubtful if "she" could take her own weight any further, let alone attempting to draw a train. In her stead an ugly unromantic creature, whose scientific name is a "saddle tank," hooks on. Ugly as it is, however, every ounce of its weight rests upon its six driving wheels, and in nine minutes it succeeds in dragging us over the four miles to the top of Dainton incline; having mounted 280 feet, or as much as the whole rise in the first 60 miles out of London, within a space of two miles and a half. Down again with equal abruptness to Totnes; and then a stretch of 19 miles of as stiff climbing as any to be found in England carries us along the flanks of the hills at a height of 480 feet above sea-level, and so across the watershed that separates the valley of the Dart from the valley of the Plym. It is the same story of ups and downs all the way to Penzance, so let us vary the monotony by a glance at the famous Cornish viaducts. As already mentioned, there are more than forty of them, with a total length of over 5 miles. In the 8 miles between Devonport and St. German's alone, there are nine viaducts averaging about a sixth of a mile apiece. The biggest of course is the great Albert Suspension Bridge at Saltash, Brunel's last work; but there are two of the timber trestle-bridges, each over a thousand feet in length. Close by Truro there are two together, from which one looks down on to the lofty roof of the new cathedral, with a united length only a few

yards short of half a mile. But picturesque as they are, these skeleton structures are not only unfit for rapid running, but are ruinously costly to keep in repair, and timber is fast being replaced with solid granite from the Company's own quarries. From the largest and finest of the new erections, the viaduct at Moorswater below Liskeard, one can gaze down 150 feet at the miniature Looe and Moorswater Railway passing underneath, whose passengers are required in all cases to take a ticket from the guard immediately upon entering the carriage.

Over such a course as this, in spite of the additional difficulty caused by the fact that the line is single almost all the way, the up express covers the 112 miles from Penzance to Newton Abbot in four hours, or at the rate of 28 miles an hour. From Newton to Paddington the rate is 43, but the second half of the performance is certainly not more creditable to the Company than the first. For it must always be remembered, in reckoning the speed that may fairly be expected, that the political as well as the physical geography of the district needs to be taken into consideration. It is one thing to run past towns such as Derby, or Wigan, when you have got Manchester and Liverpool, or Glasgow and Edinburgh beyond. But it is quite another to ignore little towns like Liskeard, Bodmin and St. Austell, Redruth, Camborne and Hayle, in order that the handful of passengers to or from Penzance may be brought a few minutes nearer the Metropolis. Still there are not a few people who complain that the English train service is not what it should be, and stands in need of radical reform. Some even go so far as to say, that matters will never be placed on a satisfactory footing, till the Government, with its vivifying touch and with that organizing genius which is so conspicuous in the management of the War Office and the Admiralty, looses the red-tape bonds in which the commercial enterprise of the Railway Companies has hitherto been swaddled.

Perhaps therefore it is worth while to see how an English company really does compare with its State-owned, or at least State-aided and State-controlled foreign rivals. And the Great Western, which not only is the longest line, but also has an unusually large proportion of non-competitive traffic, may well be taken as a sample of the whole. In the table given below it can certainly not be said that the points selected for comparison are unduly favourable to the English Company. On the contrary, Penzance is only a quarter as populous as Kiel, the

smallest of the towns given. The garrison alone of Brest is more numerous than all the inhabitants of the Cornish town. Again, the petty cross-channel traffic of Milford is a bagatelle compared to the commerce of Trieste or Marseilles, which latter town is also the first link in the long chain of rich and populous pleasure cities which encircle the Mediterranean from Hyères to San Remo. Kiel is only a few miles off the high road to Denmark and Sweden, while Dantzic is only just aside from the main thoroughfare between Russia and Western Europe.

| ROUTE. | Distance in miles. | Time of fastest train. | Speed in miles per hour. | Fares. | | | Fares per mile in Pence. | | |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------|--------|---------|--------------------------|-------|-------|
| | | | | 1st. | 2nd. | 3rd. | 1st. | 2nd. | 3rd. |
| London and Mil- ford | 285½ | hrs. min. 8 0 | 35·65 | 47/9 | 35/6 | 22/8½ | 2· | 1·5 | ·95 |
| London and Pen- zance | 326½ | 8 55 | 36·61 | 63/6 | 44/6 | [25/11] | 2·3 | 1·6 | [·95] |
| Paris and Brest . . | 381½ | 13 31 | 28·20 | 60/ | 45/ | 33/ | 1·8 | 1·4 | 1 |
| Paris and Marseilles | 540 | 14 38 | 36·84 | 85/ | [63/9] | [46/9] | 1·8 | [1·4] | [1] |
| Do. (<i>train de luxe</i>) | „ | 14 29 | 37·28 | 133/ | „ | „ | 2·95 | „ | „ |
| Berlin and Kiel (<i>via</i> Hamburg) | 249½ | 7 12 | 34·65 | 37/ | 28/ | [19/10] | 1·78 | 1·35 | [·95] |
| Berlin and Dantzic | 286 | 8 40 | 33 | 41/ | 30/6 | 21/5 | 1·72 | 1·28 | ·9 |
| Vienna and Trieste | 372½ | 13 56 | 26·71 | 78/ | 58/ | 38/ | 2·51 | 1·87 | 1·22 |

NOTES.—The fastest train is in all cases taken, whether up or down.
Fares enclosed in brackets are not available by the best train.

Certainly English railways have no need to be ashamed of a comparison which shows that a train stopping a dozen times in the first eighty miles, is only fractionally slower than the Marseilles *rapide*—*l'Eclair*, the French journals prefer to call it—which is limited to first-class through passengers, and only makes eight halts between Marseilles and Paris. The fastest train for second-class passengers takes over 18 hours (=less than 30 miles an hour) while third-class through passengers are admitted *par exception* to a train which performs the journey at the magnificent speed of 25 miles an hour. To Penzance the speed of the best third-class train is a fraction over 31. As for fares, the English first and second class, though markedly less than the Austrian, certainly look higher than those prevailing in France or Germany. It should be remembered,

however, that they include a much more liberal allowance of free baggage. After all, the first-class fares, in which the difference is most marked, only affect three passengers out of every hundred. As nine Englishmen out of ten go third, the really important question is, what is the third-class accommodation? And to this question there can be but one possible answer; that for the same fares as prevail on the Continent the carriages and the speed are incomparably superior. The fact that third-class passengers, in a rich and by no means parsimonious country like England, bear a far larger proportion to the total number of persons who travel, than they do in poor countries like Germany or Italy, is the best testimony to the superior advantages of the English third class.

Cornwall is famous as a field for the geologist, and its railway traffic might also be not unaptly described as partaking of the characteristics of a geological formation. As we proceed further and further west, we seem to pass every few miles into a new *stratum* of traffic. At Plymouth the talk is of great steamships, whether it be the amorphous conglomerate of chimney stacks and conning towers that passes nowadays under the name of a man-of-war, or the last new addition to the P. & O. or the Royal Mail fleet. At Liskeard granite reigns supreme. A few miles further, Bodmin and Lostwithiel are absorbed in the fattening of beasts for the London market. Par, St. Austell, and Fowey are concerned only to know what percentage of china-clay the heathen Chinese may be induced to pay for in the shape of "grey shirtings." Camborne and Redruth, and the little town of Hayle, which imports their coal and make their pumps, are in the height of prosperity or the depths of adversity, according as the tin from their Wheals and Carns and Pols rises or falls in price in the London market. Finally, with the broccoli and early potatoes, which Penzance produces, the mackerel which it catches, and the narcissus which it imports, we pass back again from the mineral to the animal and vegetable kingdoms.

Partly in consequence, no doubt, of the removal of the headquarters of the Peninsular and Oriental from Southampton to the Thames, partly owing to the growth of newer lines such as the Orient, the importance of Plymouth as a port of call has greatly increased of recent years. Seldom a day passes that some great steamer does not either embark or disembark its passengers in the Sound. And the arrangements for so doing are certainly of the most complete and convenient description.

We were down there one day last autumn, and the *Ballaarat* from Bombay, and the *Orinoco* from the West Indies, were telegraphed about midnight as off the Lizard. The P. & O. vessels, as a rule, run to their time table with the accuracy of an express train, but the *Ballaarat* is one of the newest and fastest boats, and arrived three days in front of her contract time. In the early dawn the signalman at Penlee Point flashed the news of the almost simultaneous arrival of the two ships—each line has its own code, whether of flags or rockets—to the look-out man on the Hoe. At once the tenders prepared to start from the Milbay Docks, fine roomy boats with saloon decks—the *Raleigh*, the *Drake*, and the *Smeaton* are their appropriate names—and by the time the vessels had come to anchor under the lee of the breakwater, a tender was alongside each. With the minimum of delay the passengers, their pale faces a startling contrast to the highly coloured complexion of the Devonshire folk, were passed with their belongings, not forgetting Her Majesty's mails, down from the towering decks of the great ships to the pigmies alongside. Before ever we had cast off our fastenings, the *Orinoco* and the *Ballaarat* had weighed their anchors, and steaming ahead full speed in the ample sea-room of the spacious harbour, they were outside the breakwater by the time we had got inside the shelter of Drake's Island. Arrived in the docks, with in very truth what the shipowners would term a "miscellaneous cargo" of orchids and bananas, guava jelly and cigars, deck chairs and silver claret-jugs, the passengers had only to step on shore and obtain their tickets in the adjoining waiting-room, and then, as soon as the Customs inspection was completed, take their seats in the railway carriages standing ready on the quay. A fee of 2s. 6d. per head, in addition to the railway fare, covered all the vexatious dock-dues and landing charges, portorage and boat hire, to which in many places travellers are still exposed. By three o'clock that afternoon Londoners would be at home in their own houses.

The Cornwall Minerals Line, which runs from the north coast at Newquay, to the south coast at Fowey, was projected and constructed for the conveyance of ironstone. But the iron mines have not proved a success, and its main business is nowadays the transport of china-clay. Fowey, whence a hundred thousand tons are shipped every year, must surely be one of the most lovely harbours in the world. The sea runs up the narrow channel, deep enough to float big ships moored along the shore, leaving

between the water and the hills only just room for the narrowest of lanes, and the thinnest line of houses along it. Each inhabitant can choose whether he will step out of his front door into his cart, or out of his back door into his boat. Higher up the harbour than the town are the jetties where the clay is shipped. The largest proportion goes to Runcorn, loose in the hold of the vessel, into which it is shot from hydraulic tips with no more ceremony than so much coal; and from Runcorn it is conveyed either by railway or canal to the Lancashire cotton-mills and the Staffordshire potteries. For export to foreign countries (and the Cornwall china-clay is sent all over the world) it is packed in barrels.

But though, *faute de mieux*, a railway may be ready enough to deal in china-clay, there is not much profit to be made out of hauling a 10-ton truck a dozen or twenty miles for a few pence per ton. The traffic of Penzance is of a very different kind. In volume it is no doubt small, though Penzance has been known before now to send off 68 truck-loads of broccoli, or 12 tons weight of narcissus, in a single day; and over 800 tons of mackerel in a single week. But its value is very different, and the railway company carries it for hundreds of miles. No doubt perishable traffic of this kind is expensive to work. It comes in fits and starts; the rolling stock must be ready on the spot to take it the instant it arrives; and if it fails to arrive at all, must stand idle, earning nothing. Then, at best, the trucks are loaded on the return journey with empty packages only. Further, perishable goods must be conveyed at express speed, and it may often happen that an engine has to be despatched specially with only half or quarter of a load. Still, on the whole, there is no reason to doubt that the business yields the Company a satisfactory profit. Lately, however, we have been assured, on no less authority than that of the fishmongers and fish-salesmen themselves, that the railways are the only people who make any profit whatever out of the trade in fish. Let us endeavour to bring this assertion to the test of facts.

A Cornish mackerel weighs, say, on the average 1 lb., and costs the retail London purchaser, at an ordinary fishmonger's shop, 6d. The larger fish are mostly Irish, sent to London *via* Milford. 6d. per lb. equals 56s. per cwt., or £56 per ton. The railway rate is 70s. per ton, plus an extra 5s. per ton for cartage in London, if performed by the Company. But as in every 10 lbs. for which the Company charges, 3 lbs. weight of boxes is included, it would

perhaps be fairer to say that the railway rate for the fish is about £5 10s. per ton. As the boxes or "pads" are returned from London carriage-free, there does not seem to be any other opening for charge on the part of the Company. There remains therefore over £50 per ton to be divided between the fisherman and smack-owner on the one hand; the fish-buyer, the fish-salesman, the bummeree (if he condescends to touch so plebeian fish at all) and all the other host of forestallers and regraters in the middle; and the retail fishmonger on the other. In what exact proportion the sum is shared, it is not easy for the outside public to learn. The prevailing impression that the fisherman does not receive too large a share, is no doubt correct. If it be true, as the fish-traders say, that the cost of carriage often amounts to more than the total sum that is paid to him, we are then confronted with the fact that the middleman and the retailer receive between them about £44 per ton, or over 700 per cent. on the original cost of the article. The subject is eminently one on which more light is required. At present the railway charges, which are fixed and published, are the only element of certainty in the whole calculation. Perhaps it would be as well, if the fish trade also would lay their books open to public inspection.

Meanwhile there is one point that is quite clear. Supposing the railways to carry the fish gratis, and the fishermen to succeed in obtaining the whole of the present cost of carriage, they would receive 1*d.* instead of $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* per lb. as at present. Putting it the other way round, assuming the fisherman to be left as at present, and the distributors to remain content with their share of £44 per ton, the thrifty housewife might look forward to the gratifying prospect of being able in future to purchase a sixpenny mackerel for five-pence halfpenny.

For broccoli and new potatoes the rate is 35*s.* per ton; if, to allow for the weight of the crates and hampers and for the charge for returned empties, we call it 40*s.*, it will be practically correct. Roughly speaking, this is $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* per lb. It is impossible to put the retail cost of new potatoes at less than 2*d.*, or of broccoli at less than 3*d.* (for some months past it has been more like 5*d.*) per lb. So that again it does not appear that the railway absorbs a very large proportion of the retail price. Nor does it seem as if the Penzance market-gardener, who, it is estimated, receives about £72 per acre as the gross return of his land, after deducting cost of carriage and salesman's commission, has any very great reason to be discontented. The Penzance

potatoes, however, do not as a rule come to London at all. The London market is mainly supplied by the Channel Islands. Penzance finds its markets in the great towns of the Midlands and the North. To Newcastle the through rate is 46s. 8d., to Edinburgh it is 65s.—say $\frac{1}{3}$ d. per lb. Efforts have been made of late years to carry this traffic by steamer; but not apparently with over-much success. A cargo of broccoli delayed for a week by fog, and delivered half rotten, or a load of potatoes carried in the hold of a collier and landed with the thin new skins torn and bruised, can hardly compete on equal terms with the superior condition of railway-borne produce.

The Scilly narcissus-trade deserves a word of notice. A year or two back it was non-existent. Last year the total consignments, up to the middle of April, were about 60 tons, or 30 tons weight of actual flowers. The profits of the islanders, which were very large, were invested not in the savings-bank but in the purchase of new bulbs. This year, up to the middle of April, nearly 120 tons had already passed through Penzance; just double the amount for the same period in 1887. The flowers are gathered and packed in time to be despatched by the steamers every Monday and Thursday morning. Leaving Penzance at 5 P.M. the same afternoon by the mail train, they are in London at 4 next morning, and at Covent Garden an hour later. One day last March the mail took 12 tons in four huge broad-gauge parcel-vans piled right up to the roof with neat little boxes. The carriage of this one consignment from Scilly to Covent Garden amounted to upwards of £100, of which the steamer took £30, the cost of transfer at Penzance was £9, and the Great Western got the balance. A satisfactory profit, doubtless; but if we reckon that the contents of each box fetched from £1 to £3 in the flower-shops, and that 250 boxes go to the ton, we shall see that there was a fair margin left for the subsistence both of the flower farmer and the London florist.

But we have lingered too long in the far West, and must hasten back to Swindon, though the place look as uninviting as it did one day we saw it last February, with the snow piled in great heaps against the walls and plastered tight under the roof of the platform; while the drifts formed so fast, that it was more than the platelayers could do to keep the point-rods and signal-wires free and the points in working order, and more than the engine could do to get away from the platform without assistance. Swindon is only another Crewe, or another Derby, or

another Doncaster, but it needs no skill to find new features of interest to study at each of these huge establishments. A corner of one would furnish out matter to fill a volume of description. In one place we came upon a whole gang of harness-makers, diligently stitching. They are only making head-stalls for use in the Company's stock of horse-boxes. In another place we find that even in the matter of economy the broad-gauge is not wholly without advantage. A lattice-work girder, 124 feet long and 12 feet 6 inches high, is being riveted together, and is going to be sent down to Bristol in one piece, to form part of a new widening of the line that the Severn Tunnel has rendered imperatively necessary. Portable riveters, in shape and size like a horse-collar, opening and closing at the pointed end, hang suspended from above, and are fed with water through flexible coils of copper-tubing. Each machine performs the work of a dozen lusty boiler-makers and strikers.

When we cross the rails into the carriage shops, we begin to wonder whether the skilled mechanic will not ere long be an extinct species. Here we come across a boy of fourteen, making curtain rings out of flat discs of wood, by a process somewhat similar, and implying about as much mental or bodily exertion as is required to squeeze oil-paint out of a collapsible tube. Close by, a second boy looks on while a copying lathe reproduces, with a scrupulous accuracy that the most skilled hand-turning could never hope to rival, the thickenings and taperings of the oval-shaped handle of a platelayer's pick. A little further on a file, alone and unattended, has taken a band-saw in charge, and is sharpening its teeth, while two studs, nudging alternately from opposite sides, give them the requisite "set." We turned to the foreman and enquired how long it would be before the saw would be taught to get up off the table after the operation and go back to its work. His reply was, "Well, Sir, they do say that a man only wants a hammer and a glue-pot to build a railway carriage nowadays." But if the glue-pot has so far remained outside the range of influence of steam power, its brother, the paint-pot has already succumbed. For one shop we found in sole possession of a small engine, that was assiduously grinding and mixing paint. It is true there was a man looking on, or, as he would doubtless have arrogantly described himself, "in charge"; but the engine went on with its task with a quiet self-confidence that brooked no interference.

An hour's run from Swindon brings us to Gloucester, no longer on the main high road to South Wales, as the new route by Bristol and the Severn Tunnel cuts off fifteen miles. As we spin down the Stroud bank we are constrained to wonder what proportion of the passengers in the train, even of those who remember the geography that they learnt at school, realize that we have been traversing the defiles of the great chain of the Cotswolds, and have passed from the Thames to the Severn basin. Another hour brings us to the much more remarkable geography of Monmouthshire and South Wales. If any one looks at the railway map in "Bradshaw," he will find that a square block of country, whose four corners are represented by Newport, Cardiff, Merthyr and Abergavenny, is black with lines running almost due north and south. If then he will turn to an ordinary atlas, he will find that the railways are replaced by rivers, of which the Usk, the Ebbw, the Sirhowy, the Rhymney, and the Taff are the most important. But the flow of the rivers is not more constant, nor their volume greater than that of the marvellous and never-ending streams of coal that find their outlets at Cardiff and at Newport. Cardiff, including Penarth, ships ten million tons of coal *per annum*, not far short of double Newcastle, Sunderland and West Hartlepool all put together; the shipments of Newport for 1886 were nearly four million tons, and are increasing rapidly. The whole neighbourhood has grown more like some mushroom American city than like staid English towns that had a place in history when Robert of Normandy came back from the Crusades. At the beginning of the century, the census gave Cardiff a population of 1018; in 1841 it was only 10,000; in 1881 the houses numbered more than the individual inhabitants of forty years earlier. To-day the population is estimated to be over 120,000. In the same eighty years, Newport has risen from a mere village to a town of 45,000 people. As for the trade of the district, it is on record that at the beginning of the century, "coals were brought chiefly from the Caerphilly Mountains, in bags weighing from 100 to 130 lbs., on horses, mules and asses, with a woman or a lad driving two or three of them. This was principally done in fine weather, for it was customary to avoid the incidental delay of frost, snow, or bad weather, by bringing in the winter stock at a particular time." Since then the arrangements for moving coal have been considerably modernized. A few months back a vessel went alongside the quay at 8 P.M. on Saturday night.

At 12.20 A.M. on Sunday morning she sheered off with a cargo of 1300 tons on board.

Needless to say, both Cardiff and Newport are supplied with all the most recent and most powerful appliances for dealing rapidly with large cargoes. In the common form of coal tip, the truck runs up to the edge of the quay ; there it is received on a hydraulic lift, which raises it some eight or ten feet, and then, tipping it up behind, discharges its contents down a shoot into the hold of the vessel. The empty truck then goes back the way it came. To this system there is this obvious objection, that till the empty truck has been got out of the way, another full one cannot be brought up. At Newport an improvement has therefore been made, by which a second high-level line is provided to take the empty trucks straight away back from the top of the shoot, so that the lift goes down empty and is ready to receive a fresh load forthwith. In this way it is possible to get rid of a truck-load of coal every two minutes, or 300 tons within the hour. But the ship can seldom receive its cargo at this rate. The coal falls in a huge heap at the bottom of the shoot, and then there has to be a pause, till it can be trimmed. So at the Roath Basin, the latest addition to the Bute Docks, a new plan is being tried. The coal truck is emptied bodily into a huge coal-hod, and the coal-hod is swung by a crane on board the vessel, and guided to the exact place where the coal is to lie. A handle is then pulled, and the bottom of the coal-hod, which is like the roof of a house sloping outwards on all sides from the centre, falls off and causes the coal to run out sideways instead of straight downwards. The size of the colliers themselves is on the same scale of magnitude as the Cardiff Docks. Vessels of two or three thousand tons are only in the second class. It is no uncommon thing for a ship to sail with 4000 or even 5000 tons of coal on board. A notice, which is affixed prominently about through the docks, gives an apt idea of the dimensions which the traffic has attained : "Keep off the edge of the quays, as the coal-dust, especially in calm weather, makes the water look like land."

But, Cardiff and, in a less degree, Newport will shortly be exposed to a very formidable rivalry. Of the 10,000,000 tons of coal passing through Cardiff in the year, four-fifths are brought by the Taff Vale Company. The Taff line not only works in close alliance with the Bute Docks, but it is, practically speaking, the owner of the docks on the other side of the river at Penarth.

That it has done its work well, few people will probably be found to deny. But it has paid dividends of 17 and 18 per cent., and in these days coal-owners and shippers may be forgiven for looking on such returns with jealous eyes. Rumour has it that a deputation of coal masters demanded certain concessions some time back. "If you want that," was the reply, "you will have to build your docks for yourself." The coal masters took the hint, and to day the Barry Docks and the Barry Railway are almost on the eve of completion. The very apple of the Taff Company's eye is the Rhondda Valley, which runs out of the vale of the Taff above Pontypridd. Not only is its steam-coal the best in the world, hitting exactly the happy mean between the bituminous coal of Monmouthshire and the dusty and brittle anthracite of the fields further west, but its quantity is inexhaustible. The Rhondda Fach and the Rhondda Fawr (Big and Little Rhondda) turn out between them over 6,000,000 tons per annum. Into this happy valley the Barry Company are now going boldly to intrude, and, tapping the traffic of the Taff almost at its fount, are going to conduct it by a subterranean channel through the hills that have hitherto confined it, down to a new outlet into the sea at Barry. Here nature has gone more than halfway towards constructing a spacious dock, by fixing an island half a mile off the coast, with a low marshy neck of land between. It needed only to carry a causeway from either end of the islet to the mainland, to pump out or dig out the marsh between, and the dock was made. It is now approaching completion, and considering that the shareholders in the dock are not only the owners of the railway that leads to it, but also of the collieries that must feed the railway, it can hardly fail to have a prosperous future before it. Fortunately for the Taff shareholders, they have an ample fund of profit upon which to draw, but it is likely to be long before they see a dividend of 18 per cent. again.

It is impossible to conclude these notes on the Great Western Railway, imperfect and fragmentary though they may be (and no one can be as conscious as the writer that the half of what is best worth describing has not been described), without saying one word of the Severn Tunnel. The tale of its construction has been told often enough; the dogged determination of the Company and its chairman that the tunnel should be made, the heroic pluck of the divers and navvies who boldly faced the fierce rush of subterranean rivers, form a chapter in engineering history of which Englishmen have a right to be proud. To

show the magnitude of the task, it may be mentioned that Sir Francis Head, himself an engineer by profession, writing less than forty years ago, deemed it necessary to accentuate with italics and notes of exclamation the marvellous fact that, during the construction of the Kilsby Tunnel, "by the main strength of 1250 men, 200 horses, and 13 steam-engines, . . . the astonishing and almost incredible quantity of 1800 gallons of water per minute was raised from the quicksand and conducted away." At the Severn Tunnel, now that the springs have been finally beaten and pumping has been reduced to its normal amount, about 10,000 gallons per minute are being raised from a considerably greater depth. One single pump with buckets over two feet in diameter lifts every 8 seconds, and will lift every $5\frac{1}{2}$ seconds if run to the full power of the engine, 490 gallons of water from a depth of 250 feet. Not long since, a workman was sitting on the side of the open culvert into which this pump discharges. Just as the huge beam, with its 40 tons of gearing attached, reached the top of its stroke, he slipped over the edge; the water surged up, and in an instant he was carried riding on the crest of the wave right out into the river. On the whole, the 16 pumps are lifting over 500 million gallons per month, or enough to supply a town the size of Liverpool, and burning 1000 tons of coal in doing so. It is at present in contemplation to use the power of this water as it runs down to the river to drive electric machinery to light the tunnel.

Another point in which we have improved upon our fathers may be noted. A Kilsby navvy, being asked if he ever went to church, replied, drawing his metaphor from his daily avocations, "Soonday hasn't cropped out here yet." At Sudbrook, above the great spring, there was a wooden chapel for the use of the workmen. This building took fire and was burnt to the ground. Within three weeks, the bricklayers working night and day, and fires being kept constantly alight to dry the walls, a solid brick edifice with seats for 600 people had taken its place. The pumps are not the only machinery constantly at work. There is a huge fan that exhausts 220,000 cubic feet of air every minute, and keeps the tunnel so clear of smoke and steam, that the platelayers say that at midday, from the bottom of the incline in the centre of the tunnel, they can see the sun shining on the metals at the mouth two miles and a half away.

The working of the tunnel traffic, which is advancing by leaps and bounds, has already given occasion for more than one

ingenious development of electric science. Among them may be mentioned a wire carried through the tunnel, which, if cut by the guard's knife in case of break-down, sets bells ringing in the signal cabins at either end, and gives warning that the lines are blocked. Another thing is a bell at the bottom of the incline to give timely notice to drivers and guards to release their brakes, lest the sudden jerk should snap the couplings. The bell is set ringing from the signal box as the train enters, and is silenced by the train pressing down a treadle as it passes it. By a further refinement, a portion of the current is diverted through a small indicator bell in the signal cabin, that the signalman may be sure that all is working correctly. But it is expected that before long the growth of the traffic will compel the division of the tunnel into two sections, and the erection of a signal cabin in the middle. In that case we fear the men will find that the punkah constantly at work over their heads renders the climate anything but tropical.

What the consequences of the opening of this great highway may be, it is as yet too soon to speak. Southampton and Portsmouth are already drawing their steam-coal by land instead of by water. That ships trading to Bristol will load in Bristol docks with a return cargo of South Wales coal, is among the possibilities of the immediate future. Even now it is said the travellers of Bristol houses are taking orders from the mining centres of Monmouthshire and Glamorgan that formerly went to the Cardiff shopkeepers. A new cross-country service of expresses from Bristol and Cardiff, through Hereford and Shrewsbury to Lancashire, is spoken of as probable. To the Great Western the value of the connection in knitting together its disjointed parts can hardly be over-estimated. Twenty years since, Great Western stock might have been bought for 38. As we write, it is quoted at 144. But no one who knows the line and its capacities for development can think that the rise has yet reached its limit.

W. M. ACWORTH.



A Lady's Winter Holiday in Ireland.



PART II.

ON arriving at Waterford Station, on Christmas Eve, my host's butler who met me told me the "'Buses," &c., were "took off for the holidays," an amusing contrariety. Consequently I arrived at the Bishop's Palace in the Parcel Post van, a red box on two wheels, with such a backward tilt that when it backed up to the Palace door, and was opened, I was shot out much in the fashion of a sack of coal. In this beautifully situated historic town, of ancient smells and dirty streets, and unbroken records for 1000 years, the things which chiefly interested me were the streets of thatched, two-roomed, one-storied workmen's houses, with gardens, and the great number and imposing appearance of the Roman Catholic institutions, new as well as old, 95 per cent. of the population of the town and county of Waterford being Catholics. Odours of pigs predominate, and the pig, cattle, and poultry trade with England is enormous. Waterford is full of endowed charities, some of them, as the General, still called the Leper Hospital, dating from the twelfth century. Among these "Bishop Foye's School," which until lately afforded an admirable commercial training and education to forty Protestant boys, has been severely crippled by occurrences arising out of "the state of things," the "Plan of Campaign" having won a victory for an abatement of rent, which has been the chief cause of a reduction in the number of boys from 40 to 12.

The women of Waterford are comely, and it is only among the girls that costume is giving place to the tawdry hats and bonnets, badly-fitting tight jackets, unsightly humps, and high-heeled boots which vulgarize and deform our own lower-class young women. The out-of-doors costume of the older women

consists of a long, black-cloth cloak of extravagant fulness, the copiousness of which is set in close pleats into a round yoke. A wide, long, deep hood, also of ample proportions, attached to the cloak, is worn over the head and folded back. Such a cloak, which costs from two to five guineas, lasts a lifetime.

At Waterford I saw only Protestant Episcopalians and Loyalists, who bore themselves quietly, and expressed themselves on the burning questions with extreme moderation, desiring only to be let alone. I heard nothing new or especially enlightening, except regarding the improved position, growth, and prosperity of the Protestant Episcopal Church. The general opinion (in brief) was that many of the tenants could pay their rents if they would, that many more could not pay, that present rents are generally too high, that much of the discontent is the work of agitators, that the great *desideratum* is quiet, that the priests, as a whole, are rather following than leading the people, and that much loyal feeling exists in the South of Ireland, the expression of which is suppressed for prudential reasons.

On a frosty and sunny morning the country between Waterford and Fermoy looked very attractive, sprinkled as it is somewhat thickly with well-thatched, lime-washed homesteads and outbuildings, larger farms, and gentlemen's houses with wooded demesnes. Live-stock abounded, and in spite of the enormous Christmas exportation, every homestead was surrounded by fowls and turkeys. From Cappoquin to Fermoy, the country along the Blackwater is remarkably pretty, the tillage careful and modern, and the walls, gates, and fences in good order. Of course the distress arising from the low price of farm produce is felt there as everywhere else; but a gentleman who acts for eight landlords in the district told me that the landlords, who are mostly resident, had "met the times" by abatements of from twenty to twenty-five per cent., and he had encouraged the tenants to get their rents fixed by law. He denied the existence of any serious agrarian troubles in that neighbourhood. The tenants had nearly all joined the League, many (he said) giving him to understand that they did so in order to escape the consequences of running counter to the popular feeling.

Fermoy is beautifully situated on the Blackwater, which cuts it in two, the halves being connected by a fine bridge of thirteen arches. The crest of the hill on one side is occupied by barracks for 3000 men, and the steep ridge which rises on the other above the main street is rendered imposing by a long

line of modern, handsome, Roman Catholic Ecclesiastical and educational buildings. The long main street is chiefly occupied with shops, amongst which those for the sale of drink hugely preponderate. Mr. O'Brien, M.P., had recently obtained the now notorious "new clothes," and several shops displayed Blarney Tweeds with conspicuous placards attached to them, "W. O'Brien. His new suit. Tullamore." In one window there was a long row of "scent sachets," each one with a silk front, bearing alternately portraits of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Parnell.

It was the great winter pig fair, and the feature of Fermoy was pigs. The long street, the side streets, the river and the fair grounds were packed close with small pig-carts, most of them drawn by asses, which were frequently getting up free fights on their own accounts, adding their harsh discordant notes to the pandemonium of squealing. I counted 327 carts in a few minutes. Each was usually accompanied by a man in a long coat much out of repair, a woman with a long black cloak drawn over her head, a girl with a shawl over her head, and a boy or two. As it is the custom to lift the swine by their ears and tails, and as all who bargained shouted at the tops of their voices, the noise was appalling, but mirth and fun were lacking. One monstrous pig, so fat that he sank exhausted after labouring along for a few feet, was an object of great interest. Two gentlemen asked his weight. "Six hundredweight, yer honour." "He wouldn't turn the scale at five," they rather scornfully replied. "Lay yer money on it," shouted the crowd. "Weigh! Weigh!" Bets were freely offered and taken, the excitement intensified, and after much difficulty, and much impeded by the crowd, the pitiable brute squealing and gasping, dragged from before, and pushed from behind, sank on the public weighing-machine. "Lay yer money! lay half a sovereign on him! lay the money on his back!" shouted the crowd to the gentlemen who had presumed to think that the monster would not turn the scale at five hundredweight. This was done, and the pig turned the scale at six hundredweight twenty-five pounds, a result received with yells of delight by both men and women. This incident was all that relieved the monotony of the best-behaved fair I ever saw.

In the evening I went to Mitchelstown on the mail car, a drive of ten miles, with three men who passed the time in telling stories of clever escapes from the police. On a winter evening, this road, which crosses the Kilworth Hills at an elevation of 750

feet, is dreary enough, and the land looks bare, cold and sour ; but as it dips down into the wide, rolling valley in which Mitchelstown stands, the view is singularly fine. The mercury was below freezing point, the wind was strong and pitiless, and on the other side of Mitchelstown, the Galtee Mountains, white with new-fallen snow, rose abrupt and ghastly in the twilight into heavy snow-clouds. The large village of between 2000 and 3000 inhabitants is an unprosperous-looking place. On entering it, the first object to attract notice is a jail, the next a police barrack, then a good house with the lower part heavily barricaded, and the upper windows filled up with brushwood, and an inscription in long letters, "Plan of Campaign! No Surrender! Evictors come on!" denoting active hostilities. Let into the pavement on the other side are two stone crosses marking the places where two men fell, mortally wounded in the "massacre" or "riot" of 1887. A little further is the large square or place where the fatal meeting was held. A small cross in the gravel marks the spot where Lonergan was shot dead, the first victim of the panic and bungling of that deplorable day. The long village street is full of small, unprosperous-looking shops, decaying with the general decay of the tenantry and the poverty of the proprietrix, Lady Kingstown. Sixty-one liquor shops prey upon the vitals of the town. College Square, with its fine avenue, and its picturesque stone houses, where eighteen ladies and twelve gentlemen live in comfort and refinement on a foundation of a late Lord Kingstown, is a pleasant and agreeable feature of the town.

I spent two days at a very comfortable little house in the Square, visited Constable Leahy, who was injured for life in the lamentable "affair," in company with the Protestant clergyman, and from him, as well as from Father Sexton, heard narratives of the meeting and of that which followed, leaving no doubt on my mind that "somebody blundered," for neither among their accounts, nor among those given me by several persons of lesser note were there any serious discrepancies.

As all are aware, the "Plan of Campaign," on the Kingstown estate, after a protracted struggle, gained a victory in March 1888. All people who endeavoured to enlighten me described the state of the neighbourhood as one of great difficulty and suspense, with extreme poverty and depression. They said that trade was stagnant, that travellers got few orders, that stock had

all been sent out of the country, that agricultural operations were at an end, that the indebtedness of the neighbourhood, divided among banks, shops, and local money-lenders, could not be less than £90,000, and that no one had anything left on which to obtain credit. Five hundred and forty tenants had applied to have judicial rents fixed, and at a court held just before my visit a number of cases had been settled, the reductions averaging the all-round reductions which had been demanded by the tenants.

Father Sexton, the C.C. of Mitchelstown, called on me, owing to the indisposition of Dean O'Regan, and also Mr. —, one of the active leaders of the League, who spent five of the best years of his life in penal servitude for complicity with the Fenian movement. Father Sexton one of the most cultured and candid priests I met with, held aloof from the League till after the passing of the Crimes Act. It was he who administered the last sacraments to the men who fell mortally wounded in the village street. He was "not prepared to say that the *first* shot fired by the police was unjustifiable." My conversation with Mr. — was chiefly on general topics. He put forward a very gloomy view of the situation. He thought that "if better times came, the farmers would have to content themselves with getting nothing more than food and clothing out of the soil." On my asking what he expected would be the benefits of Home Rule, he replied that "a National Government would have it in its power to grant loans at easy rates for the encouragement of home industries and manufactures, and that under a settled *régime* capital would flow into the country instead of out of it. I asked him whether any measure of Home Rule would satisfy the National party which did not yield the control of the customs duties into the hands of an Irish Parliament, and whether the farmers were not regarding the imposition of protective duties as an essential element of Home Rule? He smiled significantly, but made no reply.* Mr. — said that "strangers from England and Scotland were doing a great deal of harm by leading the people to expect a great alteration for the better in their circumstances as the immediate result of self-government, while in his

* In every case in which I was able to converse freely with the tenant-farmers, and the opportunity occurred many times every day, when I asked them what help in their industrial circumstances they expected as an early result of Home Rule, the reply was given promptly, and without circumlocution, to this effect: "It would enable us to put on protective duties on agricultural produce and woollen and linen goods."

opinion it would be a slow and up-hill process." He said that his business (an auctioneer and valuer) gave him special opportunities of knowing the condition of the neighbourhood, which he described to be on the whole one of general bankruptcy with no available assets. He said that "when he was connected with the Fenian movement, and for many years afterwards, he had no hope of justice being attained for Ireland through the ordinary channels, but now he had every hope that it would be secured through the Irish Parliamentary Party."

After dark, under his guidance, I crept into the Sullivan's house through a hole in a wall. This has been described as being "the best barricaded house in Ireland." The family has shown great tenacity of purpose in adhering to "the cause," for their business was ruined and for a year gone, and having a large house which they had wrecked by their plan of fortification, they were living in the kitchen, which did not admit any daylight, the doors and lower windows of the house being secured by heavy timbers let into the floors, and the upper windows with brushwood, which, as one present said, would allow of their "throwing down things upon them."

Father Sexton greatly regretted "the distracted state of mind which is inseparable from the conflict." There are in the neighbourhood, he mentioned, 2500 members of the League of the Holy Cross, and formerly, he said, the concerts, lectures, and other entertainments given in the fine Temperance Rooms which were equipped by a former priest, were very largely attended, but that now all interest is centred in "the conflict." Although the local branch of the National League is suppressed, meetings are held after Mass every Sunday. Mr. Mandeville had just received an ovation on returning from his incarceration in Tullamore prison, and every one regretted that I did not see him. Dear indeed to the Irish heart is the man who has been in jail for a political offence! I have not been in a house except those of Protestants, in which a portrait of W. O'Brien has not occupied the place of honour.

Early on a grey, blae morning I walked from the Youghal Station into the town of Youghal, a picturesquely situated, old, decayed, marine town, from which all that gave it any semblance of prosperity has receded. In the garden of the Elizabethan house, north of the Church, Raleigh planted the first potatoes ever planted in Ireland. There are various matters of historical interest, among them Raleigh's house, in which he entertained

Spenser, the beautiful church of St. Mary, not long since restored, and the town walls, round towers, street gateways, and ruined abbeys, which are curiously jumbled up among the narrow streets. Its late history may be summed up in progressive unprosperousness, the imprisonment of Canon Keller for "contempt of court," *i.e.* declining to give evidence regarding certain circumstances connected with bankruptcy proceedings in the case of a tenant on the Ponsonby estate, which he regarded as having come to his knowledge in his clerical capacity, and a fisher boy named Hanlon being "run through the back" by a policeman's bayonet in a tumult which arose on the occasion. The spot on which this youth was "martyred" was shown to me. Youghal has of late been made the point of departure for the "Ponsonby Estate" by very many English and Scotch M.P.'s and "Liberal deputations" and "delegations," and I do not purpose to repeat the oft-told story of the conflict. It is enough to say that the tenants, who number between 200 and 300, in November 1886 demanded certain reductions on their rent, that the landlord offered abatements which were considerably less, that a gentleman who might have negotiated a compromise was absent, that the landlord is an absentee, that the tenants *en bloc* adopted the Plan of Campaign, that a few were evicted, and their holdings taken over by the Land Corporation, and that evictions on a large scale were regarded as impending at the time of my visit. Two or three of the wealthier tenants whose barricaded houses I visited have been evicted lately, but the war continues and neither side shows symptoms of exhaustion.

Youghal, like many Irish towns, is dominated by a line of handsome R. C. buildings, in one of which I spent an hour with Canon Keller, a priest of imposing appearance and prepossessing manner, a man of mark and culture. Evidently and undoubtedly he loves his flock, and I fully believe that in coming forward as he has lately done in connection with the "Plan" he has been actuated by a sincere desire for their welfare. He introduced me to Mr. —, who has been one of the leading spirits in carrying out the Plan, and was lame from a fractured leg, got in its service. We spent the next seven hours in driving over the Ponsonby Estate, and visiting many of the tenants. The east wind was strong and keen, sodden snow was lying about, the mercury just hovered above the freezing point, and hours of holding on to a most uncomfortable car benumbed both body and spirit. The chill sunless day enhanced the general dismalness,

but even in sunshine anything more profoundly melancholy than this large estate, which has been "shorn and swept till it is almost as smooth as a billiard table," could hardly be seen except in the hopeless slums of a large city.

Much of the higher land is very poor, and obviously much impoverished, hedges were ragged, walls dilapidated, gates dropping to pieces; there were few if any preparations for crops, no manure on the pastures, roofs were tumbling in, miles of grazing land were to be seen without cattle, farmyards without even a solitary hen, houses without furniture, some of the larger farmhouses with doors and windows taken out and heavily barricaded, everything saleable got rid of, so that the landlord might find nothing on which to distrain for rent. In a few cases the tenants had planted a few potatoes, in others they had retained a pig or a donkey in the hope of a settlement, but on the whole the state of matters was as I have described it, one of silence and desolation, much as if an invading army had passed that way. On two farms cattle were being grazed by emergency men under police protection,* but on the whole industry was absolutely suspended. The demeanour of the people corresponded with their surroundings. In going from house to house there was not a smile, nor a kindly, cheery word, only a sullen stagnation, a nearly hopeless clinging to the hope of better things. Bitter complaints, fierce denunciations, and the piteous wail of poverty met us everywhere.

I saw some of the people alone, the better to get at their real views. All spoke bitterly of "grievances," rack-rent, "falling prices," no allowances of materials for repairs, no consideration on the part of the Ponsonby agent, while Mr. Young and Mr. Gubbins, neighbouring proprietors, had "met the times," and live in perfect peace with their tenants. They told me that in the best of recent years they had only been able to pay their rents by remittances from America, or from daughters in service; that they had only "praties" in winter, and stirabout of Indian meal without milk in summer; that they could hardly get clothes

* Emergency men were always described to me by Nationalists as "cut-throats, jail-birds, scum of the Irish jails, ruffians," &c. On the other hand, Mr. Beattie, of the Cork Defence Union, who is officially perhaps the largest employer of emergency labour in Ireland, assured me in the strongest language possible, that no emergency man employed by him had ever been in jail for any criminal act, though possibly some might have been locked up for drunkenness; that a most searching investigation into character is always made, and that many of the men are highly recommended by the clergy.—I. L. B.

to cover them, and had for years past been drifting deeper and deeper into debt with the Youghal tradesmen in the endeavour to pay their rents and keep their holdings. The people of this region, the District Inspector of police deposed on oath, had been "an abnormally quiet people;" and quiet and free from crime they remain, though their sullen despairing air and their intense hatred of the system by which they believe their ruin has been wrought, impressed me most painfully.

I did not see one man there (or anywhere) who did not fully admit the right of the landlord to what he regarded as a "fair rent," which in every case in which I put the question was placed at something more than half the present rent. They all said they were willing to buy the land at from 12 to 16 years' purchase, calculated on judicial rents. Many of the farmers were living in a state of rags and squalor perfectly appalling, every element of wretchedness being present, except disease and impure air. Still, on being asked by my *cicerone* if I had ever seen anything to equal the misery of the dwellings, truth compelled me to say that I had seen it surpassed in a multitude of cases in the West Highlands and Islands of Scotland, but among *cottars*, not farmers. I will not "pile up the agony" by descriptions of miserable hovels with old people and young children lying on mud floors among the potatoes, for it is impossible to know what misfortunes and circumstances besides "rack-rents" have contributed to such a deplorable wretchedness. It must, however, be borne in mind that, barring the sums which may have been paid into the "Campaign Chest," the poverty has not been aggravated by the payment of rent for a year and a half at least.

I met there with a form of reply to which I afterwards became quite accustomed, and which contains one great grievance. On asking the tenant of Knockmonalea how long he had been on his farm, he replied, "Over two hundred years!"

After a day of painful experiences, aggravated by cold, hunger, and merciless jolting over stony roads, just as the grey day was passing into twilight, we went by a carriage-drive and shrubbery to what might be called "a gentleman farmer's" house, which had once been very pretty, but as doors and windows were gone, and their places filled by heavy timbers, it looked more like a fortified ruin. We got in at the back, and a handsome, dignified woman received us without a smile, and took us into a large kitchen furnished with two wooden stools. Living with nothing

to do, month after month, in denuded, darkened rooms, was enough to account for this lady's melancholy, and she recalled with bitterness the days when it was a cheerful comfortable home. Everything movable, even the grates, had been sent away. Only a very pretty paper on the walls of a large drawing-room, the windows of which were filled with brushwood, remained to tell of better days. There was no servant, no labourer, the byres and stables were empty, there was no living creature in the fine paved farmyard, only a lone woman and her girl in a dark, damp, denuded house, waiting for better days, but dreading worse, and gradually losing hope, it seemed. She paid £212 a year in rent and taxes; she had, and possibly still has, capital, but she entered the combination along with the poorest tenant on the estate. "How do you like the 'plan'?" I asked, after some conversation on that inexhaustible topic "the state of things." "Like it," she replied with much bitterness of tone, "I'm sick of it—I wish I'd been in eternity before I went into it; but I'm a lone woman, with no one to guard me, and if I were to pay my rent I should be shot."

Our last visit to Mr. Maurice Doyle of Inchiquin was a very cheery one in some aspects of the case. This is a fine farm with a rental of £370, iron gates admitting to a long carriage-drive, a good house, and very extensive farm-buildings in good repair. But the house itself was uninhabited, and had been ruthlessly pulled about for purposes of fortification. The doors and windows were heavily barricaded, and even the great flagstone at the front door had been taken up. On the front was painted in large letters, "Exterminators, come on!"*

Mr. and Mrs. Doyle, the latter a very pretty, graceful-looking young wife, were living with their five lovely children in a large dark outhouse with an earthen floor. In this the youngest child was born. Mr. Doyle, a handsome, spirited-looking young fellow, is no doubt a man of capital, and spoke in the cheery tone which capital gives. After declaring that they would fight it out now to the end, he said that when the tenants decided to adopt the "plan," he at once held an auction of his stock and sold them off at the best price of the day, while many who sent their beasts to friends, not expecting the struggle to last so long, had had to sell them later for what they would then fetch, and had lost seriously. He said that he could not have gone on

* The "Exterminators" have just accepted the challenge, and "come on," taking the defenders by surprise, and the tenant has been evicted.

paying his rent, and added, "I'm as well as I am in the meantime," *i.e.* if nothing was coming in, nothing was being paid out.

A long, bleak, bitter drive in the darkness ended at the Imperial Hotel in Youghal with a good fire, an excellent dinner, and a long conversation with Mr. O'Neill, the secretary of the local branch of the National League. The intention of the managers of the Plan of Campaign undoubtedly is to replace the tenants in the position in which they were before the struggle began, but one may be allowed to doubt whether this will be *morally*, even if it is financially possible.

I reached Cork late the same night, and "alighted" at the Victoria Hotel, which I soon found was the Nationalist headquarters, and much excited about the arrest that morning of the foreman printer of the *Cork Examiner*, one of the most pronounced of the Nationalist papers, the office of which is opposite. Guests, waiters, chambermaids, all, and at all times, talked Nationalism. Dr. Tanner flitted as a familiar spirit through the corridors, liberated political prisoners were regaled at the bar; English Home Rule lecturers, and English and Scotch delegations addressed crowds from the balcony, political telegrams were received and discussed all day long, nothing was to be heard of but Ireland, and Irish grievances and aspirations.

Being anxious to see as many sides as possible of "the state of things," I took a day's drive of about thirty miles in the County Cork in order to visit some of the families who have been and are "strictly boycotted." It was a matter of some difficulty to get a car for such an expedition, but through friendly intervention, a car-owner, a Cork man, but a Protestant and an Orangeman, undertook to take me. There are said to be 22,000 Protestants in Cork, who count for little or nothing, as for prudential reasons they do not make their voices heard, except in the very feeble squeak of the *Cork Constitution*. My driver had, however, "the courage of his opinions," and even ventured to commit the heinous crime of "driving the police."

I left Cork early on a brilliant frosty morning, returning late at night under a cloudless sky, and it was a truly delightful drive, whether through the smiling woodlands, and trim demesnes which skirt the bright waters of the Lee, or upwards over the purple moorlands, on which boldly outlined mountains rest, then white with new-fallen snow. The small bay horse trotted merrily without a stimulus, and the driver being a prospering

man was quietly and intelligently cheerful. We went quite up to the skirts of the high hills into pleasant pastoral country, dotted with limewashed homesteads, before we came to the families of which I was in search, calling on the way at a farm which, in spite of police protection day and night, had had the steading burned down three weeks before. The way to the farm of Barraharing lay down a steep narrow lane with high banks, involving getting off the car and walking, while the hinged footboards were turned up and back over the seats, which narrowed the car for the narrow road. On the way down we passed two or three farms, close to one of which the McCarthy family live in a good farmhouse, with large outbuildings all in good order, and pleasant grazing land around it, 240 acres in all. This man has another farm some miles nearer Cork, and has been very thrifty and industrious. He is boycotted as a "landgrabber," but he desires it to be understood that he did not take "an evicted farm" (in which case apparently he would have recognized the justice of the sentence), but a farm which, after being the subject of litigation for some years, was duly advertised and let to him as the highest bidder. For eighteen months he says he lived in peace, and then the sentence went forth. In September 1885, late one evening, five shots were fired into his house. The holes in the shutters and walls made by them have not been filled up. Since then he and his family have been completely outlawed in their neighbourhood.

It is not likely that any reader of this magazine knows the meaning of being left "severely alone,"* as it is understood by the McCarthys of Barraharing. On knocking at the house door, Mrs. McC. opened it a chink. I said I had called at the suggestion of Mr. —, who I knew had rendered them some services. The door was opened a little wider, so that I had a glimpse of two comely girls at the wash-tub, but it was still held with one hand and knee, and no welcome was offered. Mrs. McC. had one arm in a sling and her face was contorted with pain, and I expressed some sympathy with her, merely saying that I

* Mr. Parnell on boycotting, Ennis, September 19, 1880.—"When a man takes a farm from which another has been evicted, you must show him on the roadside when you meet him: you must show him in the streets of the town: you must show him at the shop counter: you must show him in the fair and in the market place, and even in the house of worship, by leaving him severely alone, by putting him into a moral Coventry, by isolating him from the rest of his kind as if he were a leper of old: you must show him your detestation of the crime he has committed."

was sorry to see her suffering so much, and that as I had been in a London hospital for a time I might be able to suggest something that would relieve the pain. The door at once opened wide, and the girls left the wash-tub. Their mother had a very severe whitlow on one finger, which was enlarged almost to bursting; she was flushed and feverish; she had not had any sleep for three nights, and had been walking up and down the kitchen all the previous night and morning, and there was no help to be had. There were neighbours all round, but not one dared to perform any neighbourly office for this suffering "LEPER." I asked her if she could bear a short sharp pain for the relief of her hand, and she said she would bear anything, she was "so nearly mad." So I opened the finger with a penknife for nearly two inches, and she did not wince, only gave a low short cry. After the contents of the finger had drained into some hot water, and a bread poultice and a supporting sling were put on, she said she was absolutely "free of pain." I never saw such instantaneous relief. It was worth the whole day's expedition to see the change in this poor woman's face. Both mother and daughters made me simply welcome. I was taken into a bright clean room, half parlour, half dairy, with bullet-holes in the shutters and wall; tea, rich cream and scones were provided, and the good woman said she would tell me "the state of things."

Apart from the inscrutable narrative of the taking of the farm (*i.e.*, the Landgrabbing) which was interrupted by the statement, "You see we're not like people who took an evicted farm," the circumstances seem these. After taking the farm they went on as usual for eighteen months, then came the decree in virtue of which they were to be left "*severely alone*." Their servants and labourers were compelled to leave them under threats of personal violence. Five shots were fired through their windows, since which time, two and a half years ago, two policemen have slept in their house each night. McCarthy and his family could not attend mass; one Christmas Day, all the occupants of the gallery of the chapel rose and left it as soon as they entered, and he had to be escorted home by four policemen to protect him from a mob hooting, groaning and throwing mud. The blacksmith will not shoe their horses, or the shoemaker themselves. The carpenter will not repair their house. No neighbouring shops will deal with them; and in Cork City, to which their necessities drove them, they can only buy the

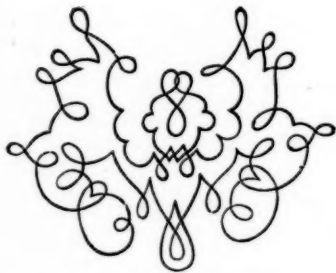
necessaries of life by stealth—here a little and there a little, the shops from which they bought meal, &c., having declined to supply them, having been threatened with boycotting by their Cork customers. The butter merchants refuse to buy their butter. Their cattle have been boycotted in Macroom fair, and the only way in which they can dispose of them is by driving them at dead of night to a given place, where they are met by an agent of the Cork Defence Union, and by some mysterious methods of changing hands are eventually shipped to England. They had to withdraw their children from school because the other children refused to attend school along with them. Two "Emergency men," supplied by the Cork Defence Union, live in their house and act as labourers. A travelling forge, equipped and sent round among boycotted people by the same Union, shoes their horses once a month. If a horse casts a shoe in the interval there is no help for it. No one ever crosses the threshold. No one ever speaks to any one of them anywhere. They can never go to weddings, wakes, dances, or fairs. They are literally shunned as *lepers*. A son and two girls have grown up under this sentence, and their *gaucherie* and peculiarity of manner are most singular. "My daughters can never get husbands," the mother exclaimed. I took the eldest on my car to her uncle's farm of Ballyherrick, where her father was, and this little "jaunt" made it a gala day. The uncle, Denis McCarthy, is "completely boycotted" for remaining on friendly terms with his brother. The particulars are the same. He, a very delicate man, and his wife are treated as *lepers*. His wife was stoned and her clothes torn by the people when attending chapel some time ago. Just before my visit some of his out-buildings, his stacks and a cart had been destroyed by incendiaries and the neighbours looked on. These people had no children, and could get no servant; they are both frail, and the woman said she wished daily she had been in her grave before the boycotting began.

In the County Cork, I visited over twenty families of completely boycotted people, who are only enabled to live by being supplied with labour and the necessaries of life through the agency of the Cork Defence Union. Some of these were "landgrabbers," some were people who had been unfortunate enough to be subpoenaed for the Crown, and others were guilty of friendliness or aid to the boycotted. The system has been most admirably contrived for rendering it all but impossible

for men to break "the unwritten law" which has become dominant over much of Ireland. A few days later, I was at the house of Mr. ———, M.P., and in the course of conversation on "the state of things," he said, "I don't think there'll be more evicted farms taken." "Why," I asked, "would the tenants be boycotted?" "Worse than that," he answered, "Murdered?" I asked. "Yes. I couldn't recommend boycotting in Kerry. The people are desperate, and it would mean murder. You could not say 'there's a marked man, don't speak to him' but what there'd be a shot fired some dark night."*

ISABELLA L. BIRD.

* Mr. Gladstone on boycotting, May 24, 1882.—Boycotting "is in the first place combined intimidation. In the second it is combined intimidation made use of for the purpose of outraging private liberty of choice by fear of ruin and starvation—we must look to this that the creed of boycotting, like every other creed, requires a sanction, and that the sanction of boycotting—that which stands in the rear of boycotting, and by which alone boycotting in the long run can be made thoroughly effective, is, *the murder which is not to be denounced.*"



Old Family Plate.

Of all the domestic treasures which have been preserved to our own time, perhaps none would be thought more certain to have carried their history with them than those formed of the precious metals. From their intrinsic value, their freedom from liability to breakage and decay, the ease with which they might receive inscriptions and the permanence with which they would retain them, articles of gold and silver would seem specially likely to combine historical with artistic interest.

It is therefore somewhat surprising how little is known of even the more important of such objects in important collections.

The serious student of an art subject is likely to have from time to time special opportunity of examining the most remarkable specimens in public and private hands of the kind to which he devotes his collection, and of learning what the owners and custodians believe about them. The lover of old plate will soon convince himself that of the little that is supposed to be known of the origin and history of the pieces submitted to him, part is doubtful and the rest impossible.

Whether from the loss of records, or want of care during intervening days, a great deal of ancient plate has, in point of fact, to tell its own history afresh ; and truth, as in other cases, proves often stranger than fiction.

And if there is much to be learned from old plate, its fashion and its curious marks, it is not necessary to be a crowned head or the conservator of a state-museum, to have access to much that is of value and interest. Comparatively few people realize what can be made out of their own familiar household surroundings. There is hardly a well-established family, especially if it has enjoyed the blessing of a settled home, which has not more unwritten history in the family-plate chests than it is well aware of.

But before we set about examining old family plate, particularly if it be our next-door neighbour's and not our own, we

must remind ourselves that even here we may be treading upon dangerous ground. What has already been said of national, is even more true of domestic treasures ; and family traditions as seldom bear the test of close examination. Our path will soon be strewn with the fragments of shattered beliefs, and if we persevere long enough with our researches, we shall run no small risk of dying without a friend.

On the other hand, it sometimes happens that the very revelations by which cherished legends are destroyed for ever, prove to be themselves of such a genuine interest as to be the foundation of strengthened friendships. This is the happier side of the candid connoisseur's experiences.

With these cautions, and prepared for the worst, let us take heart of grace, and turning to the humble and genuine treasures of old-fashioned family life, see what they can be made to tell.

Humble and genuine, say we, because the more magnificent sideboard plate our various friends have themselves purchased of recent years, stands upon a different footing and represents a different interest altogether. Much of it has been acquired in the auction-room, and has nothing to tell of the history of its present, however redolent it may be of former, owners.

For who is not aware of the almost exaggerated interest which is aroused by the discovery nowadays in garret or cellar of some ancient family possession? What effort is spared or enquiry stinted which may serve to link its history with that of its owners? And is not the very first care of the founder of a new family to fill his capital mansion with everything that may best supply the want of the envied heirlooms of more ancient houses?

There is no better illustration of the change that has come over society in these respects than the sale-catalogue of the present day.

Time was when the family plate, pictures, or library were parted with only in the hour of direst need, and then almost by stealth. Now, the magnitude of the sale and the historical interest of its items throw a kind of halo of notoriety over the unconcerned vendor, who calmly turns into all the larger sum of ready-money the coveted illustrations of his ancient race, by selling them with a carefully compiled pedigree and every possible authentication.

What a contrast to the anxiety with which his respected father would have stipulated that every trace of his coat-armour, and every other means of identification, should be erased from

the family salvers before he sorrowfully agreed to part with them for their mere weight in silver coin, thinking himself fortunate to find a purchaser at such a liberal price for his "second-hand" plate!

With this digression, let us turn to a good-natured neighbour, who has neither been tempted to buy, nor driven to sell, and getting his permission to spread out for once on the long dining-room table every single bit of his family plate, antique or not, let us proceed to arrange it chronologically by the help of its hall-marks, which we shall find in most cases readily enable us to do so. It will amply repay both our host and ourselves, for we shall all learn something from the enquiry: he some curious little bits of family history perhaps new to him, or at all events corroborating what he knew before from his family papers, and ourselves benefiting by not a few notes on many subjects that interest us, relating to the old plate, its makers, and the habits and fashions of those who have used it in bygone days.

There will be some surprises, too, in store for us; for at least one valued object supposed to have been inherited from a distant ancestor, and always ascribed to the glorious time of Queen Anne, will prove to date from the Regency, and *vice versa*. But the first real coincidence that will come to light will probably be the remarkable quantity of plate that seems to have been acquired all in the same year about three or four generations ago, say in the year 1765. How was this? Was it a coming of age; the setting up in life of a new branch of the family; or was it a marriage? Well, this is to be settled by another of the useful little set of marks everything bears. We have already arranged the collection chronologically by means of the date-letters, and now the makers' marks show that almost every piece of this group of acquisitions in 1765 was made by a different silversmith. Wedding presents, of course, we decide at once, for a family outfit would most probably have come *en bloc* from the respectable goldsmith who was honoured by the family custom. And we are quite right, for what is this curious little solitary object, which is all there is to represent the following year 1766? Why, it is the first-born's pap-boat, and no indistinct hint at the same time of our friend's grandfather's arrival into the world. Then comes his christening cup; and it curiously enough confirms the legend that George III. was his godfather, for the maker was the famous Thomas Heming, who was the Court goldsmith at that time. Then there is the great

punch-bowl of 1787, the present of the tenantry on his coming of age ; and last, not least, in the sumptuous set of dinner-plates of twenty years later and adorned with a coronet, we bring ourselves into the present century with a sign of the political energy and ability which had held from 1787 to 1806 one of the county seats in Parliament against all opposition, and then received its appropriate and customary reward. Our good friend, the third baron, little thought that his family history was in his plate-room, almost as distinctly and almost in as much detail as in the veracious pages of Sir Bernard Burke.

And let not the reader suppose that such coincidences as these are mere creations of fancy ; with names added and dates altered, they are within the present writer's personal experiences.

Before we leave old plate considered in its family aspects, let us note what at first seems curious, that it has so seldom been the subject of romantic adventures. But little has ever disappeared and come to light again in sensational ways. The most that has happened to it has been, that genuine historical relics have been lost to view, to be replaced by new friends under the old names. Perhaps on second thoughts this is not so strange ; for whereas a celebrated diamond is easily concealed and only valuable as it is, articles of silver or gold, in troublous times, had a tendency to disappear, once for all, and that into the melting-pot. We shall therefore find, that after every great war or revolution, a quantity of previously existing treasure has gone for good, to be replaced by vessels of the fashions prevalent in the succeeding epoch of peace. The Koh-i-noor or the Orloff diamond may be lost for centuries, and who shall say where they have lain hid, and who has worn them ? But if ever they turn up again, they are unchanged. Unlike jewels, old plate represents the varying tastes and changing fashions of succeeding generations, and there is literally no end to the interest that may be derived from its consideration from these points of view. Where shall we find amid the plate of a modern family, the great salt, that in more ancient days stood at the right hand of the feudal lord, or great ecclesiastic ? Of such splendid pieces, still in the hands of the family originally owning them, the present writer has seen but one, and that has since passed into a national museum. Certainly none remain decorated with precious stones of great value, such as those described in Royal Inventories, down

to the days of King Henry VIII., but there is still an English peer who can boast of his hour-glass salt of that reign, besides one or two colleges and City guilds which have preserved similar relics of Tudor times. Of two standing salts of the reign of good Queen Bess, one now to be seen upon a mantelshelf is called a lamp; and the other finds its place upon a lady's writing-table, under the supposition that it is an ink-stand. So little is popularly known to the present generation of the table plate of the sixteenth century, when a short *repoussé* column, standing on small feet, and with a shallow depression at its upper end for the condiment, was the favourite form of standing salt or salt-cellar. It is long before we come to the small and familiar "trencher salt" of more modern days. For passing from the time when the salt was covered with a regular lid, for fear of the introduction of poison into its contents, we have an interval of a century, during which projecting arms for supporting a napkin for the same purpose, or to preserve the cleanliness of the salt, are found, arms which would much puzzle the modern butler, and what half the world would suppose were legs if they had to decide which was the right way up of the vessel, so familiar to their ancestors in Stuart times.

Even the humble spoon has a history of its own, although it is not always perhaps quite safe to be too curious about that history at the modern dinner-table. The inquisitive guest may feel aware that the eye of his hostess is upon him, and that the "Hanoverian" spoon with which he proposed to eat his soup, not without an examination of the marks on its handle, is of what is called "the perfect substitute for silver," instead of the genuine and sterling article.

The word "Hanoverian" reminds us that each succeeding dynasty seems to have brought into fashion its own peculiar spoon. Omitting the rare and artistic Apostle spoon of really ancient days, the first ordinarily found pattern of domestic table-spoon must have come to England with King Charles II., at the time of the Restoration. Some private families still can show a dozen spoons of this period, with the flat handle and cleft end known to the French as the "*pied de biche*;" but it is more often found as a specimen in the cabinet of the collector. Cut off the clefts, and you have the rather more common spoon of Queen Anne; but from Hanover, or at all events with King George I., come the spoons, of which a not inconsiderable number are still in use. These, with their plain elliptical bowl, rat-tail, and sharply

marked rib up the front of the handle, are amongst the most valuable and prized of those to be found in the old family plate-chest of to-day. And they held their own, till the House of Brunswick introduced the "Old English" spoon, as it is called by the silversmiths, which was bought by our grandfathers when they set up housekeeping at any time from 1769 to the end of the eighteenth century.

Now let us turn our attention to our friend's forks, the history of which is more curious than that of his spoons. Even he, with his supposed good old family plate, cannot show us as many as a dozen of the time of Queen Anne, or earlier. It is difficult to realize what a modern invention the table-fork is. Queen Elizabeth never heard of one. She had, it is true, a few dainty forks, perchance with crystal handles, for eating preserved fruit at dessert. But long after her time, dinner forks were unknown in England. The very earliest now to be found belong to the same nobleman whose hour-glass salt has been already spoken of, and these are not older than the middle of the reign of Charles II. The few early forks of the reign of George I. are three-pronged, and but few of our neighbours can show us four-pronged forks much before the reign of George III., from which time their fashion has remained unaltered to the present day, except for their handles, which have followed the fashions of spoons, finishing up with the familiar "fiddle pattern" of nineteenth-century use. Before the days of forks, the ewer and basin, which have now generally disappeared, were much in request after every course; whereas now the basin alone with a little rose-water makes its appearance at civic feasts after dinner, as a matter of fashion rather than necessity. Four out of five fine old basins have no doubt been melted up to supply the very forks, whose invention rendered the washing of the fingers superfluous.

What traces can we find next of the means our ancestors used for lighting their tables? Hardly any. It is a very considerable assemblage of family plate that could boast of more than one pair of the plain baluster candlesticks of the time of George I., and these would have no nozzles in them. If our friend's collection of assumed wedding presents of 1765 show us another pair, then just brand-new and ornamented with the oblique gadrooning or fluting of Louis XV. taste, he will be very lucky; but the chances are that his best set of candlesticks are fashioned as Corinthian columns, made at Sheffield, a great place for

candlesticks and their makers, not much before 1780. The rude cluster-columned candlesticks with square bases, of the reign of Charles II., which are the very earliest silver table-candlesticks known, are so rare, as to be Cabinet pieces.

And now for drinking-vessels. Our ancestors seem to have drank their ale in a perfectly plain straight-sided tankard, with a flat lid and over-massive handle, for two or three generations, replacing it with a quart mug with a swelling bowl, at the beginning of the last century, and dispensing with a cover altogether by about the middle of it.

But they sometimes drank caudle before they went to bed at night, or what would have been the use of the beautiful two-handled vessel of 1670, with tray, bowl and cover all alike, hammered into the boldest of flowers, sheltering the wildest of animals with their foliage? Their lady wives took tea without the help of a silver tea-pot, unless an earlier one, now lost, preceded the single specimen of the early years of Queen Anne that our collection shows. But at all events the little flap which covers the spout of this one to keep in all the steam and aroma of the then costly liquor, gives it a very pleasantly antique appearance. No older coffee-pot, either, appears than one of about the same date as the tea-pot, but tall and tapering, of octagonal plan, and with high-raised lid octagonal to match. The tea-urn is much more modern. Its high handles and oviform shape tell us, without reference to its hall-marks, that it is of the reign of George III.

There is much to remind us at this date of the decoration of the very room in which our present investigation is being carried on. If the plain and undecorated coffee-pot reminds us of the simple fashions which alike prevailed in England and in France at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and the fluted candlesticks of its middle period, the egg-shaped tea-urn and other pieces of the same date bring us to the types of ornamentation usually identified with the time of Louis XVI., and owing their origin and inspiration to the classical forms, which took the world by storm on the discovery of Herculaneum. More than one piece, besides the tea-urn, in any good collection, will recall the shapes in which old Josiah Wedgwood and his great designer Flaxman delighted, and will look entirely at home in the parlour, whose ceiling and mantelpiece were the work of the brothers Adam. It is not indeed impossible that if any of our old plate were supplied by Rundell and Bridge, the

principal goldsmiths of that period, it owes its purity of outline to the master-hand of Flaxman himself.

We have now taken a flying tour round the dinner-table, casting a glance, as we pass, at the spoons and fork which flank our cover, the tankard at its right hand and the salt-cellar in front of it; and if time served us, we might quote from the curious little handbooks on etiquette, which regulated their position, as well as the conduct of the butler and footman in mediæval ways, but such considerations savour rather of archæology than art. So let us plunge into the centre of the table for a minute, and examine the handsome *epergne* which adorns it. The chances are, that it is formed in stages, the uppermost being a basket of considerable size, formed of silver pierced so as to appear almost like net-work. This is of course removable, and then forms an ordinary cake-basket. If its ornament depends upon the piercing only, perhaps with the addition of a line of festooned flowers round the edge, it is of the third quarter of the eighteenth century, a very usual period for such pieces. If, on the other hand, it is less pierced, and adorned more profusely with chasing of insects, sea-shells, or reptiles in high relief, it partakes of the rococo character of the best period of the century, and is possibly by the master-hand of Paul Lamerie, who died in 1751. His best period was the earlier part of the reign of George II., and his work may fairly be compared with that of the famous Thomas Germain, and other French artists in silver of the middle period of Louis XV. Some few such pieces, on the other hand, are later, and then we shall look for the hanging drapery looped up over medallions, the delicate hind's feet and the oval boat-shaped baskets of Louis XVI. feeling.

It will be seen from all this, that there are two lines of interest, either of which is worth a little attention, when looking at our old plate. One relating to the articles themselves and their use, and the other for the light thrown by their decoration upon what we may call the chronology of ornament. We have purposely omitted to speak of such archaic vessels as mazer-bowls, for we shall not find a single specimen of them, or only one now and then in any private collection. But if we were to follow our investigations further than would be possible in an article, we should find ourselves deep in the various choice materials affected by our ancestors for their drinking-cups, for their dessert-plates or their bowls, and would find an interest that

would be new to many in tracing the descent of the modern soup plate from the ancient mazer-bowl out of which our mediæval forefathers ate their porridge with apostle's spoons, or drank their sack. Following the other line of enquiry, we should find it equally possible and interesting to trace the change from Gothic to Renaissance feeling, and to follow in perhaps closer detail, than would be possible by the aid of any other class of examples, the decay of taste, which was so marked a feature of the Commonwealth period. We should be able to recognize for ourselves, at a glance, the heavy decoration, its prevailing motive being the acanthus leaf, so popular in later Stuart times, and we should not be at a loss to distinguish those varying styles of the eighteenth century to which we have more than once had occasion to refer, and which are perhaps better known by the names of the French kings than the English sovereigns who reigned contemporaneously with them.

Finally, we cannot help hoping that the indications we have given may suggest to our readers a fresh survey in a new light of whatever they have inherited of old family plate. Some of them will certainly find that they have been sitting all their lives opposite objects of much more interest than they have been at all aware of; and in every case the enquiry will prove a source of amusement, if not of information.

WILFRED CRIPPS.



Jack's Father.

BY W. E. NORRIS.

AUTHOR OF "MAJOR AND MINOR," "THIRLBY HALL," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

I OFTEN think that the world possesses, has possessed, and will possess an appreciable number of mute, inglorious Miltons. The reflection is as trite as you please, but it does not seem to be generally entertained; for when I venture to give utterance to it I seldom or never find anybody to agree with me. It is the very nature of genius, I am told, to overcome obstacles, and a man who allows himself to be discouraged or put to silence by whatever cause, stands convicted *ipso facto* of being no genius at all. Not being myself a genius, I am easily put to silence; but I keep my opinion, all the same.

As I am now past middle age and a successful artist—in so far as any one can be called successful who has made a good deal of money but has failed even to approach the standard of excellence which he once hoped to reach—I have had some opportunities of forming an opinion upon this point. People often consult me; young fellows and the parents of young fellows are eager to hear from one who is considered to have carried off prizes how that desirable result may be arrived at; and although, of course, I cannot give them the information that they ask for, I am very willing to gratify them with the usual commonplace advice and encouragement. In return, some of them provide me with a vicarious interest in life. For every now and then I am brought into contact with a beginner who, I am quite certain, has the spark of true genius in him; and it is because I have so many times seen that spark extinguished that I am unable to admit its immortality. To say this is, no doubt, to beg the question. Those who hold an opposite theory will maintain that the spark was never there;

so that there is nothing for it but that we should agree to differ, which is always the most comfortable plan.

No theorist will ever persuade me that Jack Morton might not have become the greatest English painter of our day ; and indeed I may add that in this instance my conviction is shared by more than one high authority. Why he never did become a great painter I am now about to relate ; though I must own that I do so more for the sake of depicting a somewhat unusual character than for the sake of explaining what nobody would care to hear explained. The causes of success, if these could be accurately stated, would interest most people ; the causes of failure are hardly worth inquiring into.

I don't remember to have seen anything of Jack during his school and college days ; though I suppose I must have met him, for I have known his father all my life. It was one afternoon at the club that that amiable and popular gentleman caught me by the arm saying, "Maule, old man, I know how good-natured you are. I wish you would look in upon that lad of mine and give him a hint or two. He is going to be an artist, and he has been studying hard for some time past, and now I've set him up with a studio and all the necessary paraphernalia. It has been an expensive job," added Colonel Morton rather ruefully ; "but perhaps I may see my money back some fine day."

I replied that I hoped he might ; and two hours later I was perfectly sure that he would. For, having nothing else to do, I strolled round to the address in Berners Street with which I had been furnished, and my first glance at the canvas upon which I found young Morton at work was enough to convince me that no hints of mine were required in that quarter. What audacity ! what precision ! what a calm grappling with difficulties which most of us, knowing the length of our tether, find it so simple to avoid ! My breath was fairly taken away ; and when I got it back again, I made use of it to pronounce the warmest eulogium that any neophyte has ever heard from me.

The young man was not as overwhelmed as perhaps I may have expected him to be. He thanked me and seemed pleased by my approval ; but he had the air of having known pretty well beforehand what was the artistic value of his composition, and indeed I soon discovered that he was a beginner only in the sense of having wisely deferred his *début* until he should feel sure of himself.

"When one has decided to be a professional artist," he

observed, in answer to some further remarks of mine, "the main thing is that one should know how to make one's profession pay."

Now, by my way of thinking, this is so very far from being the main thing that, generally speaking, any young artist who started with such an assumption would at once forfeit my sympathy and assistance, whatever these may be worth; but I did not civilly turn my back upon Jack Morton, because, to begin with, his work was so admirable, and besides, after we had conversed a little longer, I saw reason to modify the unfavourable opinion which his first words had inclined me to form of him. It was creditable to him, and indeed only right, that he should desire above all things to reimburse his father, to whom, as he explained to me with a certain eagerness, he owed everything.

"I have been costing the governor money all my life," said he, "and now, through no fault of his own, he has no money to spare; so that it is high time for me to begin paying off my debts, you see."

In truth it was notorious that Colonel Morton had been the victim of a cruel stroke of ill-fortune, the old uncle to whose property he had expected to succeed, who had always treated him as the heir, and who (I suppose) had made him a corresponding allowance, having recently died, and having, to everybody's astonishment, bequeathed the whole of his estates to a distant kinsman. It was said that a joking allusion, made by Colonel Morton at the club, to the unconscionable age which his relative had attained, had been reported by some kind friend to the old gentleman; but however that may have been, Colonel Morton was cut off with a few thousands, and it was necessary that Colonel Morton's son should earn his own living. That being so, one could hardly blame Jack for desiring popularity as well as striving after perfection. The two aims are not very easily reconcilable; yet they admit of reconciliation, if a man possess both genius and patience. One of these I knew that Jack had, and the other he claimed for himself.

"I don't expect to be offered a thousand pounds to-morrow," said he; "only I must get upon the right tack, if I can."

"Then you may find it out for yourself," I returned, laughing; "I will have no hand in clipping your wings. You know as well as I do that what you have upon your easel there is not the sort of thing to take the public of this country by storm."

From the very first it was evident enough to me that he knew

most things as well as I did, and some a great deal better. There was a quiet consciousness of power about him which one does not often meet with in so young a man. His eyes sparkled more than once in the course of the desultory chat about art and artists which ensued; it was easy to see that he did not lack enthusiasm; but he had his emotions well under control—a little too well for my taste, to tell the truth.

For the rest, he was a fine, handsome young fellow, as unlike his father in person as he was in manner. His closely-cropped hair was as black as a raven's wing; but his eyes, which were large and luminous, were brown. His eyebrows were arched and his chin was broad and square. His mouth was the mouth of an artist—full, mobile, and sensitive. Upon the whole, a contradictory sort of a face.

At the conclusion of our interview I was not at all sure that I liked Jack Morton. Afterwards, when I knew him better, I both liked and understood him better; but he was always very reserved. It was a long time before I really knew him and a still longer time before we became friends. Friends we did eventually become, notwithstanding the difference in our ages; and indeed I may say that I was the only intimate friend whom Jack had in the world, though his acquaintances were numerous. At all events, he would submit, with his quiet, rather sad smile, to rebukes from me which I doubt whether he would have tolerated from any one else.

For a time came when I could not but rebuke him, little as I was able to flatter myself that my rebukes were likely to meet with attention. The fact is that he disappointed me terribly. His success was very rapid and very great—far more so than I had anticipated, or should have believed possible. In less than a twelvemonth that young man had risen from absolute obscurity to fame, and to fame of a legitimate kind too. His picture of Hercules slaying the Nemæan lion, the first that he sent in to the Academy, was hung on the line, and its merits met with the recognition which they deserved. He sold the picture well, and one would have thought that, after such a start, he had only to go on as he had begun and prosper. Yet, to my amazement and regret, he did no such thing. Certainly he prospered pecuniarily; but it was by dashing off a vast number of small pictures, not one of which was in any way worthy of him. They were clever, of course—some of them exceedingly so; but he gave neither the time nor the care to them that he ought to

have given. The critics became more guarded in their praises of him, and those who, like myself, had predicted for him a glorious career, were forced to admit, with sorrow, that they had misjudged their man.

"One must live," he would say, with a shrug of his shoulders, in answer to my upbraidings.

The absurd part of it was that he didn't live: he merely existed. He had not a single extravagant habit that I could discover; he seldom took a holiday; and the annual cost of his keep and residence in those wretched Berners Street rooms of his might, I was pretty sure, have been defrayed by the price of one of his paintings. The natural inference was that he had some secret drain upon his resources; but this was not a theory which met with common acceptance. His brother-artists, who were not particularly fond of him, declared that the fellow was a miser; and indeed it looked very much as though he must be.

"Poor, dear Jack!" said his father, whom I encountered one afternoon, as usual, in the hall of the club. "He has an old head on young shoulders—a deuce of an old head! When I was his age—ah, well! when I was his age I wasn't half such a good fellow as he is; and I'm sure it ill becomes me to criticise him, for no man ever had a better son. Still, I wish he would go about a little more and amuse himself. 'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy,' you know. I sometimes think Jack is a very dull boy."

"Couldn't you induce him to enter society rather more, you who are always in society?" I suggested.

"Oh, for the matter of that, he does dine out a good deal," answered Colonel Morton; "but he grudges the time, and he doesn't enjoy himself. I fancy he has somehow lost the trick of enjoying himself. The fact of the matter is that he ought to marry; domestic felicity would be more in his line than social amusements." He reflected for a moment, stroking his moustache and smiling, and then said: "Do you know Mrs. Marchmont?"

I did happen to know Mrs. Marchmont—a rich, handsome widow, no longer in her first youth. Not a very refined woman, nor (it was said) a very good-tempered one either.

"Surely," said I, laughing, "you don't contemplate arranging a marriage between your son and Mrs. Marchmont!"

He looked up at me with those ingenuous blue eyes of his in a slightly surprised manner.

"Well, do you know," he answered confidentially, "some such idea came into my head last night, I confess. I met Jack at her house, where we were both dining, and it struck me that she was interested in him—decidedly interested. And she has any amount of money, you know."

"Did he seem to be interested in her?" I inquired.

"My dear fellow," returned Colonel Morton, with a laugh, "does Jack ever look interested in anybody or anything out of a picture-frame?"

I could not say that I had ever seen Jack look particularly interested in any woman. He differed in that respect from his father, who had always been more or less of a ladies' man, and who, I daresay, had only been deterred from marrying a second time by a natural unwillingness to relinquish the comfort and freedom of bachelor existence. Colonel Morton liked to be comfortable, and certainly knew how to make himself so. He had a luxurious first-floor set of rooms in St. James's Street, where he often entertained his friends at breakfast; he also often invited them to dine at his club hard by, and they were always delighted to come, because his company was as good as his dinners. I don't think I ever knew a man who was more universally liked. In the matter of money, he was the exact opposite of Jack, being, I should say, a little too lavish for his means. One could not suppose that he was well off; yet he stinted neither himself nor others, and the charitable applied to him for alms without any fear of being sent empty away. I sometimes wondered whether any of the son's earnings found their way into the father's pocket. It seemed quite probable, for they were devoted to one another, despite the dissimilarity in their characters. Indeed, Jack was never weary of praising his "dear old governor," and admiring the cheerful philosophy with which that gentleman had submitted to the loss of an inheritance which he had had every right to count upon.

On the following morning Jack paid me an early visit at my studio. It was quite an unprecedented thing for him to leave his work at that hour of the day, and I expressed my astonishment at seeing him.

"Oh, well," said he, with rather an embarrassed laugh, "it's no good trying to work when you're not in the mood for it."

"But I thought you were always in the mood for it," I remarked.

To this he made no reply, but sat swinging his stick and

smoking pensively. It was evident that he had something to say and did not exactly know how to set about saying it; so, just by way of giving the conversation a start, I observed:

"I met your father at the club yesterday. He told me you and he had been dining with Mrs. Marchmont the night before."

Jack was too dark-complexioned a man to change colour easily; but as I said this, there came a conscious sort of look into his eyes which I thought might be regarded as the equivalent of a blush. I was sorry to see it. I had, I confess, sometimes feared that Jack was rather too fond of money, and that he might be planning an alliance with a wealthy widow who was "interested in him" seemed less unlikely than I could have wished it to be. I laid aside my pallet and brushes and planted myself in front of him.

"Now, Jack," said I, "if any man may venture to speak plainly to you, I suppose I may. Don't you do it, my boy. It's all very fine to be rich; but there's such a thing as paying too long a price for riches, and a nasty-tempered wife——"

"What on earth are you talking about?" interrupted Jack, opening his eyes very wide.

I explained myself in a few words, and had the satisfaction of making him laugh heartily by my explanation. He had a jolly, boyish sort of laugh, which was all the more pleasant to hear because it seemed to be so little in harmony with his rather sombre cast of countenance. One did not often hear it, however.

"Isn't that just like the dear old governor!" he exclaimed. "If he could have his way, he would turn me out to grass for the rest of my days, with nothing to do except to eat and drink and grow fat. But I'm afraid I can't marry Mrs. Marchmont, even to please him." He added somewhat diffidently, after a moment of silence, "Mrs. Marchmont wasn't the only lady at that dinner-party."

And so it dawned upon me that my friend Jack was in love, and that I was to be honoured by being made the depositary of his secret. It took him some time to disburden himself—he was not, perhaps, much accustomed to making such confessions—but the upshot of it was that he was devotedly attached to the sweetest and loveliest girl in the whole world. Her name was Alice Maitland, and she was the only child of a widowed mother. He had met her, some three weeks before, at the house of Mrs. Marchmont, who lived near the Maitlands in the country, and who had kindly taken them under her wing during the first

season which Alice had spent in London. The young lady, it seemed, had all the virtues and only one defect: she was not an heiress. In fact, there was every reason to suppose that she would have no marriage portion at all.

"Well, if you want my advice," said I, "I am quite ready to give it you. You can well afford to marry; and even if you were a poorer man than you are, I should unhesitatingly recommend you to marry the girl whom you love."

But it appeared that Jack did not want my advice; and indeed I might have known him better than to imagine that he required any assistance in making up his mind.

"Only I couldn't keep it to myself any longer," he said; "I felt as if I must tell somebody. Did you ever have that feeling?"

I had experienced it often enough in the course of my life; but I should hardly have expected him to experience it, and I said so. He smiled rather sadly.

"I know what you mean," he answered. "I don't think I am naturally secretive; but——"

He did not finish his sentence, and I could not finish it for him, for in truth I had always thought him reserved by nature; but it struck me as a little pathetic that a man of his age should be driven to make a confidant of an old fellow like me. At my time of life, to be sure, one is apt to be a patient listener; and I believe that during the next hour I showed myself worthy in that respect of the compliment which had been paid to me. What seemed to me rather absurd and overstrained was the doubt which Jack expressed over and over again as to whether he had any right to ask a refined and delicately-nurtured girl like Miss Maitland to share the hardships and uncertainties of an artist's life. There was no uncertainty at all about his power to give her all that a reasonable woman could require, and if he had hitherto put up with hardships, I could not but think that they had been voluntarily incurred.

He neither admitted nor contradicted that assertion; but he said, "It is unlikely that I shall ever be rich; and I should like to be rich—for her sake." Then, getting up and laughing: "After all, how do I know that she will look at me? I want you to look at her, though, if you will; I want to hear what you think. Not that you will be able to help admiring her."

The least that I could do was to reply that I should be delighted to inspect the young lady on the earliest opportunity,

and to express to the best of my ability the feelings of admiration with which she was sure to inspire me. So, when he mentioned that he had a sort of half-appointment to meet Mrs. and Miss Maitland at the Grosvenor Gallery on the ensuing morning, I willingly promised to accompany him thither; and away he went, whistling an operatic air. He whistled it a little sharp; but that may have been from want of practice. Never before had I heard Jack whistle.

CHAPTER II.

In the Grosvenor Gallery one sees, or used to see, a good many pictures representing a type of female beauty of which one may make so bold as to say that it is not such as would commend itself favourably to nine out of ten chance spectators. I, whose notions of beauty were formed long ago, have never found myself able to feel any fancy for it. But one of the few advantages of being well on in life is that (unless one has the misfortune to be that most hopeless of all fools, an old fool) one has learnt to be tolerant and to admit, amongst other things, that beauty is not a term which can be defined by the aid of any set of rules. If anybody finds gratification to the eye in contemplating sunken cheeks and angular figures, he has a perfect right to do so, and far be it from me to deny that Miss Alice Maitland had attractions, although these were not conspicuous to me. I don't mean to say that she in any way resembled the woe-begone damsels who looked down from their frames upon the scene of our introduction to one another; on the contrary, she was a somewhat plump little lady, with fair hair and eyes of an uncertain blue, and commonplace, regular features. I only take the liberty of mentioning now what nothing would have induced me to mention at the time; namely, that to me she appeared insipid and uninteresting. I will allow that most people would have called her pretty.

My disappointment was not, I, trust, perceptible; and if it had been, Jack would probably have failed to detect it. It was not upon my unworthy countenance that his attention was riveted, nor, I think, was he so eager to give me an opportunity of criticising Miss Maitland as to make use of me in the quality of a companion for her mother. At any rate, the young people speedily found an excuse for wandering away; and Mrs.

Maitland, who said she was rather tired, asked me whether I would mind sitting down for a few minutes in front of I forget whose celebrated work, and explaining to her in what its excellency consisted. Because she could not pretend to be any judge of pictures.

I did as I was requested, and very soon discovered that her modest estimate of her capacities was not misplaced. She certainly knew nothing at all about art, and I gathered that she was very well contented to remain in ignorance. On the other hand, she was evidently anxious to increase her stock of information about artists in general and about Jack Morton in particular. She was a quiet, ladylike little woman—just the sort of woman that her daughter would be in another twenty or thirty years—and her method of questioning me, though ingenuous enough, was not marked by any unseemly directness. In fact, I believe that our colloquy must have lasted for the best part of an hour. Fortunately I had nothing to conceal. I gave Jack the best of characters; I was able to assure her that men who had reached his eminence in the artistic profession were in the receipt of handsome incomes; and in return for communications which appeared to satisfy her, she was so good as to ask me to tea.

"We are not at all gay people," she said; "we go out very little. But I wanted dear Alice just for once to see what a London season was like; though we only see it from the outside, as it were."

As we walked away, after bidding the ladies good-bye, Jack had almost as much to say in praise of the elder as of the younger. "There's nothing worldly about Mrs. Maitland," he declared. "I believe she would give her daughter to a poor man just as willingly as to a rich one. That is, if her daughter wished it, you know."

"Does her daughter wish it?" I inquired.

He laughed and sighed. "I can't tell," he answered. "Perhaps I am too sanguine; perhaps she doesn't quite realize——" Then he suddenly changed the subject. "Do you know, Maule," said he, "I've had an offer which makes my mouth water? Lord Newick wants me to paint the panels of his ball-room for him. His place was burnt down two years ago, as I daresay you remember, and I believe he means to make the new building as perfect in the way of decoration as he can. He wrote me a very civil note, giving me *carte blanche* as to design. He said he would rather trust my judgment than his own."

I congratulated Jack with all my heart. Lord Newick is considered to be eccentric ; but he is a genuine connoisseur, as well as one of the wealthiest men in England, and I suppose there is no living artist who would not gladly accept from him such a commission as Jack had mentioned. Nevertheless, there was an artist living at that time who hesitated about it.

"The question is," said Jack, as we made our way down Bond Street, "whether I should be justified in undertaking this job. I should like to undertake it for more reasons than one, not the least of them being that Mrs. Maitland lives within a few miles of Newick Castle ; but if I do, it is certain that I must make everything else give way to it, and I'm by no means sure that it wouldn't pay me better to stay where I am and go on producing pot-boilers."

"Upon my word, Jack," I exclaimed with some heat, "you disgust me ! Have you no ambition at all ? Good Heavens, man ! is pay the one and only thing to be considered ?"

"Well," he answered quietly, "I have to consider it."

I really did not see why he should be obliged to consider it so closely as all that. Lord Newick was quite certain to be liberal ; but even if that had not been certain, a man who has any respect for himself and his craft should be prepared to make small pecuniary sacrifices upon occasion. The labourer is worthy of his hire, and doubtless a good deal of insincere nonsense has been talked about art for art's sake ; yet an artist is not, or at any rate ought not to be, a mere hawker of his wares and the obedient servant of the highest bidder. All this, and more, I said to Jack, who listened to me, as he always did, with exemplary patience. But on this occasion he departed from his ordinary custom so far as to intimate that he had a sufficient reply to offer to my rebukes.

"I have often wanted to tell you about it," said he ; "only I can't talk out here in the street. Have you time to come back to my diggings with me ?"

Strictly speaking, I had not time ; for I am a busy man, and I had already wasted a morning ; but I would gladly have thrown back my work for a month for the sake of hearing some satisfactory explanation of what had hitherto been to me inexplicable. Therefore I went with him and heard his explanation, which was not satisfactory at all.

He brought it out with evident reluctance, anticipating objections which I did not make, and warmly defending a

person against whom I was careful to bring no accusation whatsoever. I might have guessed, and as a matter of fact, I had to some extent guessed, who spent his money for him ; but what he let out, and what I suppose he had not the slightest suspicion of having let out, was that his father was a selfish and unprincipled old rascal. It is a real pleasure to me to write these true words about Colonel Morton, who, I am sure, will go down to his grave in happy ignorance of having inspired me or anybody else with such an opinion of him. He had always been—so his son assured me—the kindest and most indulgent of fathers.

"But then, you see, he has never been accustomed to live economically, and he couldn't do it without making himself perfectly miserable. When he thought, as we all thought, that he was Uncle George's heir, he very naturally borrowed money and let his bills run on. I daresay you would have done just the same ; I'm sure I should."

I was quite sure that neither of us would have done anything of the sort ; but I nodded, and Jack continued :

"Well, of course those debts had to be cleared off ; and, thank God ! they are cleared off now at last. Still I can't have the dear old man pinched ; and—and——"

"And now that you are thinking of changing your condition," I suggested.

"Exactly so ; now that I am thinking of changing my condition (though I don't know what business I have to speak in that hopeful way), it is more than ever essential that I should look after the pounds, shillings, and pence."

"I'll tell you what seems to me to be essential, Jack," said I ; "and that is that you should come to a clear understanding with your father."

"Well," he replied, "I'm inclined to agree with you. I'll consult him as to whether I shall accept Lord Newick's offer or not, and I'll abide by his decision."

That, as I need hardly say, was not in the least what I had intended to advise ; but I thought it better to make no protest. Jack was not easy to lead, and he was still less easy to drive. I could only hope that his evident wishes might have some weight with a man who was at least good-natured.

When I got up to go, the poor fellow took me by the hand and made an appeal to me which I could hardly resist.

"I know just what you're thinking," said he, "and I'm grateful to you for keeping your thoughts to yourself. I've committed

what you consider the unpardonable sin; I've deliberately chosen to work on a low level, when I might have worked on a high one. Well, I won't make excuses for myself. I think I've done right, though I don't expect you think so. But I should like you to say that you don't blame the governor. Mind you, he knows nothing at all about the sort of ideas that you and I have; he has never imagined for a moment that I have made any sacrifice, except a pecuniary one—to which I'm sure he is most heartily welcome. In fact, he was entitled to demand it; you will admit that much, anyhow."

And so, as an irreducible minimum, I was to admit that Colonel Morton had a right to live in luxury, while his son slaved from morning to night and denied himself everything but the bare necessities of existence! I gave a great gulp and made the required concession; after which I bolted downstairs. As for declaring that Colonel Morton was innocent of having consciously ruined Jack's career, I wasn't going to do that. I did not believe it at the time, and I certainly don't believe it now.

Shortly after this I attended one of the crushes to which Mrs. Marchmont is accustomed to invite such of her acquaintances as she does not deem worthy of being asked to dinner. I, on my side, don't as a rule deem crushes worthy of my humble patronage; but I went to Mrs. Marchmont's house on that occasion because I thought it very likely that I might meet Jack there; and I was not disappointed. As, however, I came upon him sitting in a corner beside pretty little Miss Maitland, I nodded and walked on, presuming that he would not care to be interrupted at that particular moment. Somebody else, perhaps, was less discreet. At all events, I had not progressed much farther on my way through the rooms when he caught me up, and, passing his arm under mine, drew me aside.

"I've sent a refusal to old Newick," said he. "Don't look so glum about it; one can't have one's own way in everything."

"Have you got your own way in anything else, as a set-off?" I asked. "No; but perhaps I may some day." After a momentary hesitation, he continued: "The truth is that the governor is not likely to look very favourably upon Alice—upon Miss Maitland. He naturally wishes me to marry a woman with money, and——"

"And you think he may consent to your marrying a girl with no money if you can point out to him that you have made everything yield to the paramount necessity of your enriching yourself—and him—as quickly as possible?"

"I suppose Jack did not altogether like my tone, for he frowned and made no immediate answer. Presently, however, he remarked: "It isn't exactly a question of consent. About some matters a man has no business to consult anybody but himself. But the governor would be the first to admit that my having given way to him in this instance entitles me to ask that he should stretch a point for me some other time."

It was Colonel Morton, then, who had made his son throw away a chance which was not likely to recur. I stifled my indignation, and drew what comfort I could from Jack's assurance that that greedy old sinner would not be permitted to forbid his son's marriage. At this moment who should appear but the greedy old sinner himself, accompanied by our hostess. Colonel Morton was all smiles. Mrs. Marchmont, too, looked amiable, which is not invariably the case with that lady.

"Your father," said she, addressing Jack in her deep contralto voice, "has been persuading me to ask a favour of you. I want to have my portrait painted, and he tells me that you would perhaps be willing to immortalise me."

"Well, I am not a portrait painter, you see, Mrs. Marchmont," answered Jack.

"I know you are not; but you sometimes make exceptions, I believe. You painted Lady Belton, for instance."

"Lady Belton is an old friend of ours, and she has been very kind to me. I painted her because she wished it; but it was not a successful likeness. I should strongly recommend you to apply to some one who might be expected to do you more justice," said Jack.

"Jack," struck in Colonel Morton, "modesty is a fine quality; but it loses all its beauty when it is carried to excess. I don't say that you can do Mrs. Marchmont full justice, because that, I imagine, would be very difficult; but I know you'll do your best, and your best is not so very bad—is it, Maule?"

"Really, I would rather not undertake it," said Jack, hastily. "Thank you very much for paying me the compliment, Mrs. Marchmont, all the same."

Colonel Morton affected to laugh off this unequivocal refusal.

"Jack's like a young lady who can sing and won't sing," said he; "he wants to be pressed. Really, I'm quite ashamed of him."

But Mrs. Marchmont, who was accustomed to getting what she asked for, refused to be pacified in that way.

"He will certainly not be pressed by me," she declared, and

her large black eyes flashed as she spoke. "I should be sorry to press any one to do a thing that he so evidently disliked."

With which she turned and swept majestically away, Jack slipping off somewhat hurriedly in the opposite direction.

I imagined that he wished to avoid a scolding from his father; but it appeared that Colonel Morton was not inclined to scold. He looked more amused than annoyed, and only remarked:

"What a handsome woman! Pity she has such a temper."

"You would like to marry her to your son, in spite of her temper, though," I observed.

"I should indeed," he answered placidly. "She wouldn't, I grant you, be the sort of wife for an easy-going, peace-at-any-price man like myself; but Jack would very soon bring her to her bearings. You have no idea how determined Jack can be when he likes—a stone wall! And as for that particular little display of temper, I wasn't very sorry to see it. Between ourselves, it looked uncommonly like pique."

And Colonel Morton, with a laugh and a wink at me, strolled off to make himself pleasant elsewhere.

He always made himself pleasant to everybody, so that I was not at all surprised to hear, later in the evening, that he had been making himself pleasant to Mrs. Maitland. It was that lady herself who informed me that she had had the privilege of making Colonel Morton's acquaintance.

"And when I say privilege, I don't use the word in any conventional sense," added the prim little woman. "He is a most agreeable person. And he spoke so nicely of his son."

"He has every reason to do so," said I; "his son has been very nice and kind to him."

Mrs. Maitland assented, though in a somewhat less cordial tone. "Yes: I can believe that Mr. Morton is a good son. From all that I hear of him, I gather that he is industrious and well-principled."

Then she told me that this young man of industry and principle meant to treat himself to a little holiday. "Alice has never seen Richmond, and he has very kindly asked us to dine with him there on Thursday next. I believe he has hopes of persuading you to join our little party."

Now, when mothers of the type of Mrs. Maitland accept a dinner from a young man, it may be taken for granted that they act under a full sense of their responsibility.

"I am going to dine with you at Richmond on Thursday,"

said I to Jack, whom I met on my way towards the cloak-room. "Perhaps I sha'n't enjoy myself very much; but I trust that you will. Of course you mean to take advantage of this opportunity of bringing matters to a crisis."

He seemed startled and a little shocked by such a suggestion. "My dear Maule," he remonstrated, "you surely don't imagine that it is going to be such plain sailing as that! I can't say that I have received the smallest real encouragement as yet."

But I assured him that it would be quite plain sailing, and that Mrs. Maitland, by consenting to dine with him, had given him all the encouragement that she had it in her power to give. "I don't think that she is precisely enamoured of you," said I; "but I am pretty sure that she will accept you."

Jack observed that perhaps a rather more important question was whether Miss Maitland would accept him, and I confessed that I could not answer for her.

At the same time, I felt very little doubt but that Jack's fate was sealed. I have mentioned that I was not much pre-possessed in Miss Maitland's favour; she belonged to a class of women with whom I felt little personal sympathy; but whatever she may have been, one might safely aver that she was no flirt.

So, when Thursday afternoon came, I took my place in the landau which Jack had hired with a tolerably strong conviction that that portentous piece of extravagance would be about the last that he would incur as a free agent, and we drove down to the Star and Garter in the good old-fashioned way.

After all, I did enjoy myself. I have arrived at a time of life at which a man must needs take his pleasures—or at any rate the best of them—by proxy, and it was impossible to watch the two young people without seeing that they were happy together. They were not demonstrative; I don't think they exchanged many remarks while Mrs. Maitland and I were keeping up a painstaking conversation; but they looked at one another a good deal, which I daresay did quite as well.

Everything fell out exactly, almost ludicrously, in accordance with my anticipations. Indeed I suspected that Mrs. Maitland had left London with a cut-and-dried little programme, every detail of which she carried out scrupulously; and I am sure she would have been surprised and disappointed if, when Jack and Miss Alice strolled away together after dinner to admire the sunset, an important result had not followed from the liberty accorded to them. She was, I should think, a conscientious

sort of woman, and her way of talking led me to believe that she had strong religious convictions. It was hardly in the nature of things that she should appreciate Jack at his real value; nor perhaps [was it in the nature of things that she should covet a son-in-law whose income was necessarily precarious; but she had made inquiries about him, and doubtless considered that she would not be justified in thwarting her daughter's inclinations. As for the inclinations of that demure little maiden, they had been plainly legible, all the evening through, upon her demure little countenance.

At the expiration of three-quarters of an hour, or thereabouts, the wanderers returned; and Jack, who had a queer light in his eyes, at once drew me aside to request "a great favour." Would I mind going back to town by train? It wasn't that he wanted to get rid of me, only——

"My dear boy," said I, "you do want to get rid of me, and it would be very odd if you didn't." And then I added a few congratulatory phrases which were at any rate sincere.

What if in my heart I did not think Miss Maitland quite worthy of this noble young genius, who for years past had played the part of a hero without once suspecting himself of heroism? When all was said, she was the girl of his choice; and though she might not be capable of adoring him because he deserved it, she would probably end by adoring him because he was her husband.

Jack was extraordinarily moved by words which most men would have accepted as a mere matter of course. He grasped my hand, and seemed quite unable to speak for a second or two. "Thank you, Maule," he said at length; "I'm a lucky fellow to have such a true friend as you are. I don't know what I've ever done to deserve it—or all this happiness. I can hardly believe in it yet. I feel as if I should wake up presently in the old room in Berners Street and find the whole thing has been a dream."

What a life the man must have led, and how little he must have expected of life, to speak like that! One consolation was that, having expected so little, he would probably be better satisfied in the future with what he had got than most of us are when we have obtained the object of our desires.

(To be concluded next month.)

Two River Roundels.

I.

THE long grey river stretches far beyond
This barren meadow, where the wind, a-shiver,
Sweeps into restless waves the stagnant pond,
The long, grey river.

One bird, a dark and solitary diver,
Skirts the wet banks, and from the field the fond
Cries of the curlew down the breezes quiver.

So well my sadder thought and mood respond
To the drear note bird wind and wave deliver,
That memory evermore will hold in bond
The long, grey river.

II.

Slow mounts the moon where yonder woods are met :
While the spent noon
Fades in pale lines of flame to westward yet,
Slow mounts the moon.

Light gusts of wind among the rushes croon ;
The bay is set,
A silver cup where love may drink and swoon,
Forgetting all the pain and vain regret,
The vanished boon,
Since overhead sleep's mystic amulet—
Slow mounts the moon.

D. F. BLOMFIELD.

A Day of his Life at Oxford.

BY AN UNDERGRADUATE.



"MR. ROBSON!"—that's me ; and the speaker is my scout.

Now of course I know that "that's I" is grammar, but I'm quite sure it's not nearly so English, and they say we can't write English, at the Universities ; so one must be careful.

I'm "Mr. Robson," we'll say then, and the speaker is my scout.

"You awake, sir?" continues that unworthy—that again is just as English as if I called him a "worthy," and much more true.

Unworthy of further notice I certainly think him in my present mood. I turn round in bed, with a sleepy grunt, and thank goodness he has gone.

But my gratitude is wasted.

"It's time to get up, sir," he persists. "You haven't kep' a roll-call this week, sir ; and the Dean he's partic'lar strict 'bout roll-call this term, sir."

"Oh, hang the Dean !"

"Which I'd be most 'appy to oblige, I'm sure, sir ; but the Dean he do 'old 'is 'ead a trifle 'igh for me, sir. Really, sir, you must get up,"—therewith he proceeds to punch and shake in the bedclothes till I can bear it no longer.

"Oh, get out, John !" I shout wrathfully, and, wide-awake now, plunge out my hand for a boot or other handy missile ; but John and this little manœuvre are old friends, and seeing that he has accomplished his purpose he evades all personal injury by shutting the door between.

My first ejaculation, of "confounded cheek !" is mitigated by the further reflection that I told him of no end of unpleasant things that would happen to him if he did not make me get up

in time to keep a "roller," as we called roll-call. Not that the fellow cares how often I am hauled up by that old Dean, all the same, but the lazy beggar likes to clear away breakfast early and get his work over. (That's the way we all think of our scouts, though, as a class, and considering their circumstances, they are very fair servants, and very firm and judicious in their management of us, their masters.)

The chapel bell is clanging forth a discord that scares away Morpheus. Then the bell stops. Now the porter is standing in the corner of the quad (meaning quadrangle, not lock-up), in his hand the list on which he pricks off the names of those who put in an appearance, dishevelled for the most part, at roll-call or chapel.

I don the divided skirt, button a coat over my night—garment, stick my feet into slippers, and crown the whole work of artifice with a battered trencher to hide my unkempt locks. In ten seconds I am in the quad. Sleepily I walk across till I catch the porter's eye and see him prick me off on his list. As I turn back, the Dean, in full academics, crosses the quad, and I am painfully alive to the connection between the severe frown which puckers his normally urbane brow and the depending braces which I now, for the first time, notice playing about my heels. As I regain my staircase, a stone thrown by a facetious friend rattles against the wall, and it is cheering to speculate on the chances of the diversion of the wrath of the Dean, whom the stone nearly hits, on the way, from my dissolute braces to my light-hearted friend.

You will notice that "roll-call" is a misnomer, for our names are not called at all. Indeed, so few attend—for we need only keep three a week, and as a rule we don't—that those who go are conspicuous by their presence, and stand in no fear of being lost in the crowd! This so-called roll-call, though, is a happy substitute for chapel, which would entail a *toilette* comparatively elegant and, from the matutinal point of view of the undergraduate, is a function of vast length and doubtful interest.

Once more in my rooms I feel conscious of owning "the makings of a head." Too much smoke or too much whisky last night!

Diving into the recesses of a cupboard, I disinter a half-full syphon of soda-water which has lost all its fizz—a stimulating beverage which so refreshes the inner undergraduate that I feel quite equal to a little more sleep. So, disencumbering

myself of roll-call costume, I am again between the blankets, when, "Rap!"

"What the dickens do you want?"

"Hullo, General, old chap," says a kind friend, putting his head in at the door. "Look sharp! You've just time to keep a roller." "General" is not my real rank, but a nick-name.

I of course know, and so does my kind friend, that roll-call has been over some five minutes, so I reply, with effusive gratitude, and, I think, pardonably mendacity, "Oh, thanks awfully, old chap, it's rare good of you to come and tell me, but I've kept all mine this week."

"Oh, well, I thought I'd tell you," says *fidus Achates*, with almost an air of injury, and goes away very sorrowful, for he has great love of a "score."

But it is in vain my weary eyelids court slumber. Oxford sitting-rooms are nice enough, and the arm-chairs are things to dream about, and in; but College bedrooms are inventions of the—monks, whose cells they used to be. Mine, I should think, was modelled on an hour-glass. At one end of the room stands my bed, at the other my bath, and there is not room for a stout man to stand, fatways, between the two walls in the middle. Towards the head of my bed the ceiling slopes down, so that if I wanted a bolster as well as a pillow there would be no room for my head on top of them. This slope is due to the fact that the staircase comes down there, so that every one clattering up and down puts his boot within three inches of my best and only brain. It's not a good thing to sleep under, at any time, and this morning I find it hopeless.

So I get up. It is a sharp day, though the month is merry May; and my cold tub looks horrid. Opening the door into my sitting-room, I see my kettle simmering temptingly on the trivet fixed to the bars of the grate. I steal out (in mortal terror that John, my scout, will come in and detect me in the act of cowardice), and conveying the kettle to my bedroom, empty its contents into my bath. I then refill the kettle from my jug and get it back, looking quite unconscious, on the trivet, just in time; for at the moment the dreaded John comes in. He looks at me with suspicion, but merely asks: "Please, sir, what 'll you take for breakfast?"

"Oh, I don't care!" say I. "Anything but fish and eggs."

"All right, sir."

My *toilette* is accomplished, my chin duly carved in the

regulation shave of a beard at best microscopic, and, re-entering my sitting-room, I see a note waiting for me on the table. As I am opening it, in comes John with breakfast.

"What have you got? What! Soles!!!"

"Yes, sir," says he, in tones which deprecate the harshness of mine. "You told me fish or eggs, sir."

"I told you anything *but* fish or eggs."

"Oh, did you, indeed, sir? Which I'm humbly sorry, I'm sure, sir. I thought you said fish *or* eggs."

"Oh, well, it doesn't matter," I reply, having meantime glanced at the note in my hand. "Mr. Sanders wants me to go and breakfast in his rooms with the Eight. You may take that stuff away—eat it yourself, if you like."

At the College I am at, it is the custom for the Eight to be invited out to breakfast during their three weeks or so of training by other members of the College. It is usual to invite one or two amateurs, not in the Eight, who may fairly be expected to initiate a remark or two, in the course of the meal, on topics not directly associated with boating "shop." I am aware that this is my prospective function on this occasion.

When I arrive in Sanders' rooms, breakfast is just beginning, though certain vacant chairs indicate that there is still an absentee or two. By degrees they drop in. The last man is greeted by a shout from the Captain of, "Hullo, Stroke! late again! You must keep better time."

This remark is received by the crew as a joke of some merits, for Stroke's time in the boat is considered somewhat puzzling: moreover, a wise man will always laugh at the jokes of one who is in authority over him.

"You get missing the beginning of the night, and you don't get through and get the finish in time," puts in the Cox, with nervous audacity.

"You! Are you talking, you wretched little creature?" shouts Stroke wrathfully. "You can't do any good in a boat, a Cox can't; he can only *not do harm*."

"How amiable training makes them, doesn't it?" says an amusing cynical non-rower, sitting next me. "They get their nerves so worked up, that if you should tread on their toe, or innocently wound their precious feelings, its just even betting whether they knock you down, or burst into a flood of tears."

The speaker has a habit of censorious criticism, whence his

nickname of Cato ; and for the most part his criticisms are barbed with the truth that underlies paradox ; and the long-drawn, nasal fashion of their delivery adds to the exasperation of their victim greatly.

Cato then launches out upon an invective of great length and vigour upon the use and abuse of College rowing in general (on the same old text of "spoiling a good cricketer to make a bad oar"), and it is only by dint of a well-directed cross-fire of bread-crusts and lumps of sugar that he is at length reduced to a contumacious and aggressive silence.

A training breakfast consists, before everything, of boating shop ; then of soles, of underdone beef-steaks and mutton-chops ; of fowls, whose scragginess gives them the figure and misleading name of chickens ; finally, of poached eggs, toast, butter, and marmalade. It is washed down with weak tea, limited in amount to two breakfast-cups, and limited, also, in the permissible quantity of sugar. We Sybarites, the non-trainers, are regaled sumptuously on kidneys, coffee, and jam ; winding up—think of it, dream of it, dyspeptic man!—with tankards of College beer.

Even a training breakfast comes at length to an end, and we disperse, the Sybarites smoking, the trained-bands wishing they might.

"I say, General," says one in cap and gown, as I stand, royally taking my ease and my 'baccy in the quad, "are you coming to old Sharpset's lecture?"

"Oh, by Jove! Yes! I suppose I must. Blow these ten o'clock lectures ; you can't get a pipe in peace for them."

However, I struggle into cap and gown, rummage in a pile of books on my table till I find an Aristotle's 'Ethics,' and armed with this, and a note-book, and a stumpy pencil, wend my way reluctant to Mr. Sharpset's lecture-room. Mr. Sharpset is a type of the discursive lecturer, and by no means the least discursive of his class. His lectures are clever, witty, well-attended, learned, and of not the smallest use for the "Schools" (the "Schools," I should say, are the examinations which the much-harassed undergraduate has to pass before he can write those mystic letters B.A. after his name).

Mr. Sharpset's lecture is on Aristotle's 'Ethics.' Aristotle's 'Ethics' is one of the subjects for the final Classical Honour Schools ; but in order to achieve distinction therein, it is less essential to have assimilated the pith of the work itself than to

know the views of some Germans with comic names upon a few of the more obscure sections of the text.

Mr. Sharpset has not begun when I get there, but is critically scrutinizing each man as he comes in (all undergraduates are men—except, of course, the Girton ones, &c.), to see if he can detect any special affectation about him which he can scarify with oblique sarcasm. The lecture being a public one, *i.e.* open to all members of the University, and an amusing one, the attendance is large and motley.

Presently he begins:—"Well, we had got to this about Aristotle's 'Exoteric discourses.' Now some people say he had exoteric discourses for every one—popular lectures—and an esoteric doctrine which he revealed only to his initiated disciples. Bah—nonsense!" said he, waving away the absurdity in an airy "Shoo fly, don't bother me!" way. "Now just consider what sort of man Aristotle was—a courtier—a man of fashion! Do you suppose he'd have lectured to a school of disciples? Why, what man on earth is there who'd be such a fool, such an arrant fool, as to lecture if he wasn't obliged to? All that we can say about this phrase 'Exoteric discourses' is that we know nothing to say about it at all.

"Now then, look at that at the bottom of the page," he goes on, making a casual reference to the text. "He makes use of a word which we are pleased to translate 'immortal'; but do you suppose you can base any argument on that as to Aristotle's ideas about the immortality of the soul? Of course you can't: he's only speaking in the current psychology of the day. But some people do. I don't know what some people won't do when they're arguing about things they don't understand. It's wonderful how easy it becomes to theorize, in the absence of facts. Why, people even try to argue from the appearance of ghosts, that the soul's immortal! But ghosts don't prove enough. If a soul appears as a ghost, it only proves that it's not dead yet, not that it's never going to die. And it's a curious thing, too, that all the ghosts are ghosts of people who have died quite lately: so I expect a ghost's a very short-lived thing. Nobody ever saw the ghost of an ancient Briton, in a suit of woad. And that brings us to another view of the argument, *viz.* that if ghosts prove anything, they prove too much, for they not only prove that a man's immortal, but that his hat and coat are immortal too: at least, all the ghosts that I ever heard of have been dressed with all proper regard for decency. I don't believe I

should be a bit afraid if I saw a ghost. Not that I am a brave man—quite the reverse—I'm awfully afraid of a black-beetle. I know I am a dreadful fool: I know it can't possibly hurt me; but still I am fearfully and painfully afraid of it—it is so flat and so soft, and goes along so fast on its back—I can't help it."

And so on, and so forth: amusing, but not useful—for the schools, at least—and off I go, at eleven o'clock, to old Professor Smoothbore's lecture, without having shortened my stumpy pencil an atom, or having defiled with its black lead the snowy page of my note-book with any thing of greater value than some spirited illustrations of a black-beetle and a very supernatural ancient Briton.

"Hem! I was just observing, Mr. Robson, as you entered the room," says the Professor, "that all such discussions are nugatory"—such as what, I speculate? "Now," he continues, "let us try to think of an instance. Hum! Hah! Yes. It requires no inconsiderable ingenuity to construct an illustration. Hum! Hah! Well, yes! I have thought of a very good one:—'all men are mortal, Socrates is a man, therefore Socrates is mortal.'"

Professor Smoothbore, be it noted, is careful to suppress all affectation of originality, for the distressing fact of Socrates' mortality has been insisted upon by every logician in want of a simple example of the syllogism, ever since the great philosopher himself furnished inductive testimony to the truth of the syllogism's conclusion. I fancy the Professor makes conscientious efforts to bring down his lectures to the level of us, his audience; and, in deep respect for his talents I say it, I really think he succeeds. Moreover he is a man of great weight in the University, of imposing presence, bald head, and kind heart.

So the Professor goes on, smoothboring us nigh to extinction till the blessed hour of twelve o'clock, when I am free to return to my rooms. On the table is a slip of paper, whereon is written:—

"MR. ROBSON—the Dean wishes to speak to you, sir, immediately.—
R. WELSH."

R. Welsh was the under-porter.

"Shows excellent taste on the part of the Dean, to be sure," I soliloquise. "I wonder what the dickens it's all about?"

Our Dean is not at all like what a Dean ought to be. He is nervous, and slightly made. He is about the age which with women is called, on the *lucus a non* principle, "certain." In my

freshman's term I was much disappointed to learn that one of the scouts, a hoary-headed robber, of venerable aspect, was not the Dean. He looked much more deanified than the real Simon Pure.

When I enter the awful presence the Dean remarks effusively :—"Oh, Mr. Robson, how are you? I—I sent for you."

"Yes, sir," I assent—a repartee which overwhelms him with embarrassment.

"Er—the fact is, er, your gate bill is very high this week. Er, you see here, you've come into College five nights the last week at twelve o'clock, and the other two nights at half-past nine. It's—it's rather heavy you know, isn't it?"

"Well, sir, I'm afraid it is; but you know, sir, I do a good deal of reading in other fellow's rooms, out of College; and I sometimes begin reading directly after Hall dinner, and then I find at nine, if I do not go out, my head gets so muddled!"

"Yes, Mr. Robson, yes, I am sorry for your head, but, er, you know that would not quite necessitate your being out till twelve, would it?"

"Oh no, of course not. I only meant that to account for the half-past nines. The other nights I was reading in other men's rooms, mostly,"—that final qualifying adverb has a deal to answer for.

"Oh, well, well, Mr. Robson, I am delighted you have been able to give me such a satisfactory explanation. Will you not stop and lunch with me? Eh? Ah! Engaged? Well, some other day then. Good-morning. Good-morning."

"Oh dear, oh dear, Jacob!" I exclaim, addressing by his nickname a friend whom I meet on the stairs, "I tremble to think of the tortures that old Dean will suffer in the next world for all the fibs he's made me tell in this."

"What, have you been humbugging him?"

"Yes, I'm afraid so. Are you surprised?"

"No, I'm not surprised; I do it myself. Come and have lunch in my rooms."

"Yes, all right; thanks, I will;" and thither we adjourn.

As usual, however, in College rooms where bells are the exception, adjourning for lunch is very different from getting it. The name of my friend Jacob's scout is George, so "George!" is shouted down the staircase, at first loudly, then angrily, then frantically, finally in chorus, with a "One, two, three, George!" by our two selves and two other friends who have also dropped

in to lunch. One prolonged "George!" rings through the College from attic to basement, but marvellously fails to penetrate the buttery.

At length, in a tone of sorrowfully indignant protest, comes an answering "All right, sir!" which is followed by George flying across the quad from the culinary department.

"I say, George, look sharp, for goodness' sake! We're going to play cricket, and the drag 'll be here at half-past one."

"Very sorry, sir. There's such a lot of gentlemen wants lunch, and all in a hurry for it. What 'll you please to take, sir?"

"What is there?"

"Usual meats, sir—roast beef, boiled beef, chicken, ham, lamb, and tongue."

"No salmon, George?"

"Yes, sir—salmon."

"Well, I'll take some salmon and salad, roll and butter, and half a pint of cider."

"Half a commons of roast beef for me, George, bread and butter—none of those musty rolls—and half a pint of beer."

"And I'll take lamb and salad, and a pint of cider cup," shouts another.

"What pastry is there, George?" asks the fourth party—a freshman, this.

"Gooseberry tart, plum pudding, and sandwich pastry."

"Oh, I'll take some gooseberry tart, nothing else, no beer."

Away goes George, having laid the cloth while receiving his orders, and shortly returns with the viands precisely as required, and without mistake. How, in the name of all that's wonderful, these scouts remember all the different orders is more than I can conceive! I'd like to see what sort of fist old Socrates or Plato, or even old Smoothbore, would have made of the job.

Very nice, Oxford lunches are; and the College does one good thing for us in providing us with fine silver tankards to drink from.

"Hullo, General! ain't you changed yet?" says one, for the other three are in flannels, ready for cricket.

"No, I'm not. Do I look like it? My flannels are in my bag up at the pavilion. I suppose we're sure to beat these fellows to-day, ain't we?"

"Are we, though? I don't think we are at all," returns Jacob, the most despondent of captains. "We've got no one to bowl them out."

The meal progresses comfortably, till from the quad are heard discordant shouts of "Drag!"

"Oh, hang it, there's that drag!" and forthwith we bolt huge mouthfuls of bread and jam, *prestissimo*.

"Jacob," says one, "you've over-eaten yourself; you're a pig."

"You haven't," answers Jacob laconically; "you're a fool."

The gentleman called "one" collapses. Jacob goes on hurriedly lacing up his boots. Presently from his direction comes "Snap!"—followed by the inevitable monosyllable, "Was it not Talleyrand who says it?" he exclaims—"No bootlace is stronger than its weakest part."

At length lunch is over, and we rush out to the drag, chuck in the cricket-bags, mount, count that our numbers are all right, and off we go. These drags are great big vehicles, drawn by four horses, and constructed to carry twenty-two, which is the number of people in two Elevens. The seats face each other, like those on top of a coach. We stop at the gate of another College for our antagonists, whom we find ready waiting. There also the liquor, shandy-gaff and cider cup, is put in. One of the other Eleven sports a confounded post-horn, which he blows apoplectically all up the Cowley Road. It is a nice drive of some two miles. There is no landscape to speak of, but you get fine points of view into the bedroom-windows on either side of the road.

When undergraduates who do not know each other meet, etiquette prescribes a deferential silence. So there is no conversation between members of the two teams during the drive. If a member of one eleven treads on a toe belonging to the other Eleven, he says "Sorry!" The owner of the toe tries to look as if he liked it, and says nothing. It sometimes happens that a member of one Eleven, if he wants a light for his pipe and there is not a light in his own Eleven, will ask one of the other Eleven for one; but this needs nerve of exceptional quality. The man he asks then hands him a light in silence, while the rest look at him with admiration, tinged by a suspicion that his action was bad form.

An Oxford cricket ground and pavilion are much the same as the same things elsewhere. We clothe ourselves in the normal fashion of cricketers—scantily; nor is there anything noteworthy in the matches themselves. It should be observed, however, that of most College Elevens the conspicuous feature is the "tail." So, in this instance, our first four wickets put on 160

runs, and the whole side is out for 175—I leave it to your charity in which section you will place me. However, it turns out all right, for we manage to get the other side out for 37, by dint of putting on an unredeemed thrower to bowl, and the Umpire being too stupid or too timid to “no-ball” him. They don’t mind much about these sort of things in College matches.

It is then time to draw, and we get back to College in the same drag, with a quarter of an hour in which to get ready for 7 o’clock Hall—that is to say, dinner.

“Is there a High Table to-night?” I ask of my scout, whom I see in the quad.

“Yes, sir.”

This mystic question means, being interpreted, “Are any of the Dons dining in hall to-night?” If not, I could have gone in in any garb I pleased. But as we are to be favoured with the presence of these dignitaries I have to wear a gown and a black, or subfusc-coloured, coat. Breach of these regulations would entail a “sconce,” *i.e.* a fine of a quart of beer for the good of the table. A like penalty is imposed for quoting three consecutive words of Latin or of Scripture, or two of Greek (all of which savour of “shop”), also for being a quarter of an hour late, and for all unseemly language and conduct, at the discretion of the senior undergraduate present, who is styled the “Head of the Table.” A man who deems himself unjustly sconced is allowed an appeal to the High Table (Don’s table), and the Dons have the right of reversing the sconce, with costs against the Head of the Table. Moreover, if the man who is sconced “floors it,” *i.e.* empties the quart tankard at one pull—for he is allowed the first—he can insist on the Head of the Table sconcing himself, forthwith. Some men of mettle habitually floor their sconce, and such vindictive characters are the dread of the Heads of the Table. An eight-penny premium is thus put on bestiality; but no matter.

The very indifferent dinner is prefaced by a very long Latin grace, mumbled over by the junior scholar—dinners and graces are apt to vary inversely in quantity. We then sit down in rows on either side of long tables. Around us hang the pious and beneficent portraits of founders and patrons of the College, for whose testamentary mercies we are as thankful as we may be as we struggle with the fearsome tough beef and mutton they have provided for us—though not exactly gratis. The College contracts with a being in human shape named the “Manciple,” for our feeding.

"Look at old Nick," I say to my *vis-à-vis*, indicating a neighbour who is doing his dinner more than justice. "He seems to be enjoying himself."

Old Nick, proper name Nicholson, looks up interrogatively, and conceiving himself to be posing as the victim of some witticism, remarks vindictively: "All right, General, I'll get you sconced for calling me 'Old Nick.'"

"All right, old chap," I say, in cheery defiance, feeling quite secure. "Go ahead."

But the Head of the Table is a wooden-headed creature, unworthy of his exalted post, and he yields to Nick's importunities for a scone. I ask permission to refer the case to the High Table. Permission granted, I write a polite note to the Dean:—

"DEAR SIR,—I have been sconced for calling Nicholson 'Old Nick.' I submit that this is a common 'nick'-name, having no diabolical connotation. Please reverse the sconce."

This humble little joke goes the round of the Dons, and presently a scout brings a note to the Head of the Table, bidding him reverse the sconce. I triumph. Old Nick, figuratively speaking, gets him behind me. "Got off by a bad joke and the skin of your teeth," he mutters sulkily, thinking to be epigrammatic.

I am down on him instantly.

"Please sconce Nicholson for quoting Scripture: 'by the skin of your teeth' (Job—though chapter and verse is not in my philosophy)."

"That's not in the Bible," retorts Nicholson indignantly, and a warm discussion sets in as to whether the phrase is Scriptural. Eventually no sconce is allowed. Pity the Head of the Table does not know his Bible better!

Presently we, undergraduates, have finished our frugal meal, and leave having been obtained from the High Table, where the Dons are still feasting off the fat of the land (it's not very so fat really, but all things are relative), out we troop.

After Hall, quad is a trifle tumultuous. Hunks of bread have been brought out, and therewith an unpopular and quite inoffensive person is bombarded. Somebody else's College cap is degraded to the function of a football. The owner will be a man of some popularity, though of slight physique, for the cap-kicking implies a degree of familiarity with him whose head ought to be inside it, such as would never be accorded in public to the "running man" of the bread-throwers.

"Come and play pool, General?" says one.

"Right you are," say I. "Have you got enough fellows?"

"Yes, five, with you."

"All right then, but I must get some 'baccy first. May I bag one of your weeds, Peter?"

Peter gives leave, so I get one from his rooms on the ground-floor, light up, and off we go. The promoter of the enterprise has judiciously bespoke a table beforehand, else we should probably have to wander round many of the haunts where such sinful games are practised, for the undergraduate is addicted to the board of green cloth, muchly. Pool is a nice game; the balls are such a pretty colour; and—this is an after-thought—there is sometimes some loose silver going about.

The pool goes on much as usual. There are the normal comments of the player after his stroke: "Oh, sold myself again!" and of the man who plays upon him, "So-and-so plays for such confounded safety, I never get a chance." (People do see things so differently.) Also, intermittently, the observation, "Ghastly fluke!"

What ought to have been the last pool terminates as the clock strikes nine, but an ardent spirit exclaims, "Come on—one more. Just time for one before 'Tom.'"

"Tom" is the big, Christ Church bell, which rings about ten minutes past nine; after which, all College gates are shut, and the undergraduate found in a billiard-room by the Proctor is fined ten shillings. Now no one in his sober wits could suppose that a pool commenced at nine by five guileless undergraduates would be finished by ten minutes past; but undergraduate flesh is weak, its wits are wanting, and we play "just one more." "Tom" goes, remorseless as the Curfew, and we have lost about one life each. A few minutes later comes a knock at the door, and in comes Proctor, with velvet sleeves, much urbanity of manner, and two bull-dogs. He politely removes his cap: "Your name and College, sir? Thank you, sir!" he notes it down in his betting-book—or what looks like it. "And yours, sir? Thank you, sir!"

He goes on till he comes to our old friend, Cato, who, on the first alarm of "Proggins," had laid down his cue, taken up the rest (there was no Marker in the room), and was now standing at attention, in his best professional manner, by the marking-board. The Proctor, weary of his inquisitorial formula, thinks it enough to look up interrogatively at Cato, who replies with great alacrity, "Red upon white, sir. Yellow your player."

"Oh, beg pardon," says Proggins; and bidding the rest of us call on him at nine to-morrow, leaves us between mirth and sorrow. We admire Cato's cleverness and cheek immensely, but we hate him because they were superior to our own.

The pool is concluded without further mishap. Back we go to College, kick at the gate till the porter lets us in, and then go up to Jacob's rooms, and make him bring out whisky and tobacco.

My word! And when I first went up to Oxford my friends all told me I should meet "an intellectual set of men."

All the same, we do try to be intellectual and philosophical, sometimes; and to-night, somehow, fall into a moralizing mood, chastened, maybe, by the prospective cheap-at-ten-shillings visit to the Proctor on the morrow, and talk of much, whereof we knew but little when we started, and know less when we conclude; but perhaps the whisky and the smoke are factors in the conclusion.

"Well, I must be off," says one, at length. "I must to bed, or I shall never be up to roll-call in the morning, and I'm awfully afraid of that old Dean."

"Oh, never mind the Dean!" says another, with post-prandial irreverence. "You needn't be afraid of him. For of authority," he goes on, growing Aristotelian under the spell of the whisky, "there are two kinds. The one is of the sort which men obey: the other, of that sort for which men care not at all, and is like to that exercised by the Dean of this College. But perhaps this is not worthy to be called authority. So let us call it by another name—and shall we call it 'helplessness'?"

Under cover of the general laugh I, and the man strong in his resolve of early rising, say good-night, and take our leave.

"By Jove, there's Smiles!" exclaims my companion, as we reach the quad; and forthwith he reaches for a stone.

"Oh, he's off!" I tell him. "Not left even a grin behind."

"Smiles," I should say, is the porter's cat, so-called, not because he grins, like the Cheshire branch of the family, but because, according to his master, who is the free-est wielder of the aspirate I ever met: "whenever there's hanything hanyways dainty about, 'e always 'elps 'isself." (You've read 'Self-Help,' by Dr. Smiles?)

"Well, good-night!" I shout to my friend, as he dashes off into the darkness in pursuit of Smiles; and I turn in, to sleep myself fresh for a similarly improving day on the morrow.

A Day of her Life at Oxford.

BY A LADY UNDERGRADUATE.

THE train from London rushes across the bridge, and as we whirl by I see the Nuneham Woods sloping down to the river, which looks silvery, with deep purple shadows in the afternoon light; an eight-oared boat, and a few skiffs are rowing back to Oxford, and add colour and life to this view, which is always lovely. I can only just see them, and then the train has passed on, bringing one familiar place after another before me. There is Sandford Lasher, with Littlemore on the rising ground behind it; now we are passing Iffley, with its old Norman Church standing on the knoll above the river. I look out rather eagerly for Magdalen Tower, which always seems to welcome us like a personal friend, as we approach Oxford. There it is, rising above the trees; now I can see Merton Tower; then the Tom Tower at Christ Church, the spire of the Cathedral, the ruins of the Castle, all appear in succession. Now I have to turn away, to give my attention to my bundle of rugs and small packages as the train slackens speed and stops at the station. I succeed, after a little difficulty, in getting a porter to take my boxes and put them on to one of the curious and antique hansoms which are waiting outside, and I tell the driver to take me to that one of the Ladies' Halls of which I am a student.

Arrived there, my first duty is to report myself to the Lady Principal, and I have a few minutes' chat with her before I make my way to the dining-room, where afternoon tea is going on, so that I can get some refreshment and greet a few friends, before I set myself to the arduous and disagreeable work of unpacking and putting my room in order, from the more or less dismantled condition in which it has been during the Easter vacation.

I am received in the dining-room with warm greetings from the half-dozen or so students who are having tea. I have much to learn and many questions to ask, as Term has begun two or three days ago, and I have been prevented from "coming up" until now. I have to be told about what College lectures are open to ladies, what new students have been admitted this term, and generally what arrangements have been, or are to be, made for work or play.

We also have, of course, to compare notes about all we have severally been doing during the vacation, and there is so much to tell and to hear, that I find my tea is being unduly prolonged, and finally I tear myself away, so as to get my unpacking and settling finished before supper, that I may begin to work directly after. I manage to finish beautifying my room, which serves as bedroom and study, there being an ingenious arrangement of screens to hide all the dressing requisites during the day, and leaving the room with quite the appearance of a sitting-room; but I have only just done all this when I find it is time to dress for supper, at 7.45 P.M., and I once more descend to the dining-room. This is a large and comfortable room: it does not aspire to the dignity of being a dining-hall, but it is sufficiently roomy to admit of the twenty-five or twenty-six students and the Lady Principal and Vice-Principal dining together, as well as an occasional guest or two who, perhaps, are staying in the Hall, or have been invited to dinner. We sit for supper at two long tables, presided over by the Lady Principal and the Vice-Principal respectively, and here I see all the inmates of the Hall and greet those I have not yet met. The supper is one of those satisfactory meals which combine the substantial good qualities of dinner with the comparative informality and brevity of tea. The conversation still runs much on the events of the vacation, but I observe that the minds of those who are to be examined in the Honour Schools this term seem to have a somewhat sober and sad turn at intervals, as the approaching ordeal looms before them. My neighbour on the right is "going in for" the Honour History Schools, and has just learned who are to be the Examiners, so she is a little anxious in her mind; my other neighbour is working for Classical Moderations next spring, and as she still has three terms before her, she does not feel the same pressing load of care. She is very full of the events of the vacation in the neighbourhood of her country home, and especially is she interested in the result of an election of a

Member of Parliament which has recently taken place, and which she thinks has gone all wrong. This introduces the subject of politics in general, and a warm discussion ensues which spreads all down the table, and is energetically carried on by the keen politicians among the students, who usually number a good many. The dispute, like other disputes, shows no signs of coming to a conclusion, until it is abruptly ended by supper being finished and grace said.

There is a meeting of the Shakspeare Society this evening; so immediately after supper we nearly all adjourn to the Library, armed with books for our reading. The characters of one of Shakspeare's Plays have been previously apportioned to a considerable number of students, and they proceed to read; while others who have no special aptitude for reading, and whose talents lie in a more practical direction, form a working party that is held at the same time as the Shakspeare meeting, and they work at making garments that will be sent to a Mission in a poor part of London. We find this combination of Shakspeare and sewing is a very pleasant one, and a good means of bringing all the students together, and increasing the general union of the Hall. We have read about half the play, when the meeting has to disperse, as a bell at 8.45 P.M. summons us all to prayers in the Chapel.

This half hour between supper and prayers is acknowledged to be almost the most useful time in the day. It is utilized in various ways. On one evening in the week it is devoted to practising the hymns and psalms to be sung in Chapel during the week, as we do not aspire to having anything like a regular choir. Occasionally a paper is read by one of the students, on some subject of interest to her, which she has mastered, and discussion follows on the subject. Sometimes, when a concert or small dramatic performance is impending, this time is used for rehearsals and arrangements. Rehearsals and practisings for concerts are usually conducted in the gymnasium, where, besides the gymnastic apparatus, there is a piano, so that when it is not required for its own use, it becomes a supplementary music-room, as the music-room is outside the house. Committee meetings of all sorts are ordinarily convened for this half-hour; or, if there is nothing of general importance to be done, this is a convenient occasion for visiting one's friends; and many of the students further employ it in making such repairs to their garments as are found to be necessary.

Whatever may be the occupation, however, the bell at a quarter before nine ends it, and we go and take our places in the Chapel for prayers. These are read by the Lady Principal, and now are seen the results of the practising I spoke of, in the hymn which is sung, to the accompaniment of an American organ played by one of the students.

Our Chapel is something of which we are rather proud. It is small, but in that it is like the Hall itself, and we have done what we can to make it nice. Some friends have given stained-glass windows, and a marble pavement, and we subscribe together so as always to have fresh flowers in the vases. But our chief joy is a niche wherein lies a cast taken from Torrigiano's beautiful statue in Westminster Abbey of I cannot quite say our foundress, but the lady from whom the Hall takes its name, Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond, the mother of Henry VII., who founded the Margaret Professorships of Divinity at both Universities, and St. John's and Christ's Colleges at Cambridge, and is said to have intended to found a College at Oxford, which intention we feel has now been in some measure carried out for her.

Chapel ended, we all go our various ways. Those not particularly studiously inclined, or who are not able to do many hours' work in the day, pay visits to their friends, or indulge in a little light reading; those who excel in athletics adjourn to the gymnasium for half-an-hour's or an hour's exercise; but the majority of the Hall repair to their own rooms and work. Almost entire silence reigns, until at 10.30 P.M. a bell warns every one that the time has arrived after which, according to the rules of the Hall, no student is allowed to remain in any room except her own. The course of action pursued after the bell varies according to the disposition of the individuals. I, and a good many more, go to bed at once. Some of the very studious continue, however, to burn the midnight oil for a considerable period, until at length darkness, and we will hope slumber, descends upon all and each, and the history of that day is ended.

Next morning I am called soon after seven, and I get up feeling myself to be but an unworthy member of this learned body, as I know that several of the very hard-working students have been at their books for an hour already. I sincerely admire people who do such things, but I do not attempt to emulate them, as I think seven is quite sufficiently early to get

up. While I am dressing, a warning bell rung at half-past seven announces to any one who may still linger in bed, that there is only half-an-hour before morning chapel, and that any further delay will mean being late and having a blank in the Chapel Register. This Register hangs at the Chapel door, and each student who is down in time puts a mark opposite to her name. This takes the place of roll call in the Colleges, only we are down every day, instead of three times a week, and so high is the standard of duty among us, added to the desire to fulfil the known wishes of the Principal, that the number of blanks at the end of term is generally but small.

After Chapel we go across the passage to the dining-room for breakfast. Breakfast resembles supper in its arrangements. We have it all together, and a very nice and sociable meal it is, during which the conversation again is general, and many topics of local and of universal interest are discussed. Our meals here are never lengthy, and as soon as breakfast is over we go to the Library, at least most do so, and look at the daily papers which have just arrived; and conversation follows, in the course of which any matter of public importance in the Hall can be brought forward, such, for example, as the affairs of the joint Debating Society, composed of the members of the three Ladies' Halls, or any points that need settlement in the business of the other Hall Societies. A few people, with apparently insatiable appetites for work, bring their books into the Library, and sit at the table, looking a little sad when the conversation becomes specially animated. But most of us think this half hour is rightly devoted to social intercourse, and we keep it so with resolution. Nine o'clock soon arrives, and all the rooms will now be ready, housemaids having hitherto been in possession; so there is a general disappearance for the business of the day, as the morning hours from nine till one must be rigidly preserved either for work at home or for lectures.

I do not have much time for reading this morning, as my first lecture is at ten o'clock. We have some way to walk to it, so I soon have to get ready, and I find the others who attend ten o'clock lectures and the Vice-Principal, who is going to chaperon us, ready also, and we get off in the bright morning sunshine, which always seems to me to be more golden in Oxford than elsewhere, for the College where the lecture is to be delivered. We take our places in the dining-hall of the College, at one table which is set apart for the ladies attending the lecture, while

perhaps a dozen or twenty undergraduates sit at other tables, and we are soon absorbed in listening to and taking notes of the lecture. There is no need for me to give any account of the lectures; naturally, they vary as to the ability of the lecturers, some are very good, and some are less so, but at any rate they are as good as are to be heard in England, and we are grateful to the authorities who have recently opened them to women. I am told also that more than one of the lecturers and tutors have said that on an average they get more satisfactory and thorough work from their lady pupils than from the men.

As I find very little is known of the scheme for women's education in Oxford, perhaps I may say a word or two about it.

The Association for the Higher Education of Women in Oxford came into being in the autumn of 1879, simultaneously with the opening of Lady Margaret and Somerville Halls for ladies. The object of the Association was to provide lectures and tuition for candidates for the Oxford Local Examination for Women. At first none of the Colleges would admit ladies to attend any of their lectures. Accordingly a room was hired over a baker's shop in a side street out of St. Giles's, and there assembled a little band, consisting of devoted lecturers and hard-working students, in whose minds the recollection still lingers of the mingled flavour of classics and new bread, to them inseparably linked with the memory of study at Oxford. The Association subsequently acquired the use of a building which then served as a Baptist Chapel on Sundays, and a lecture room in the week. This same room later became a Parochial Mission Room on Sundays, still remaining a lecture room on other days; and now, having been so far secularized as to be entirely the property of the Association, it is known as the lecture room, the most difficult of access, uncomfortable, draughty and altogether inconvenient that it is easy to find or imagine. Things are in many ways better now; several of the Colleges have opened their lectures to lady students, when duly chaperoned, and the University admits them to some of the Honour Examinations with the same papers as the men, only without conferring degrees. But a good many still study subjects not included in any of the University Examinations, and for them the Association provides lectures. It would clearly be a most desirable employment for money if some public-spirited and wealthy benefactor of mankind, were to build suitable and

convenient lecture rooms for the increasing number of women students in Oxford.

I must, however, return from this digression. My first lecture is over, and, as I have to attend another immediately, I hurry off to meet another chaperon, outside the gate of the College where the lecture is delivered. This time I am chaperoned by one of the ladies, resident in Oxford, who, though not immediately connected with either of the Halls, undertake to assist in this way by going to some of the various lectures in the capacity of chaperon.

My lectures, for to-day, are over at twelve, and as I am down in the town, and it is an hour before luncheon time, I take leave of my chaperon, and go to spend that hour in reading in the Radcliffe Camera, the reading-room of the Bodleian Library. The Lady Principal of either Hall can give a reading order at the Bodleian to any Honour Student, and this privilege is very highly appreciated, as it gives us the command of almost boundless wealth in the way of books. I find two fellow-students at work at one of the tables reserved for ladies, they having been there since the Camera opened at ten o'clock; and indeed they may usually be found there for a great part of the morning.

Presently all the numerous clocks in the town begin to strike, and warn us that it is one o'clock and luncheon time at the Hall; so we close our books, put slips of paper in them to show that we wish to have them reserved for our future use, and wend our way homewards for luncheon. This is a very informal meal. It begins at one o'clock, and those who are free and have engagements early in the afternoon begin at once, and depart as soon as they have finished; those who have lectures until one o'clock must necessarily arrive later, and relays of hot dishes are brought in for their benefit, so that nobody is obliged to waste her precious time by waiting for the others.

As soon as I have finished my luncheon, I begin to consider how I shall employ the afternoon. The next two hours are play time, and are devoted to recreation. There is a public lecture this afternoon by the Slade Professor of Fine Arts, and I know several of the girls are going to that, but I really cannot go and sit in a stuffy lecture-room on a fine afternoon like this. I see the Natural Science students preparing to go down to the Clarendon Laboratory for practical work, as they do three afternoons in the week, but I feel thankful that my work does not require me to spend my afternoons in standing and making

bad smells in the laboratory. What then shall I do? Shall I play lawn tennis? The ties have not yet been played off to determine who are to be the Champions for the Hall, to play in the match against the other Hall; and, much more important still, to decide who shall be our representative in the annual match between the two principal Oxford Halls and the two Ladies Colleges at Cambridge. I will ascertain whether the court has been engaged for this afternoon, and if not, I will see if I can get my opponent, against whom I am to play my first tie, to come and let us decide our fate at once. I find upon enquiry that another match is to be played on the grass court, and the gravel court, though it does very well in winter, is no good now, so I must find some other occupation for my afternoon.

There are walks to be taken, very charming and delicious walks, with the fresh green of the young leaves on the trees and hedges around us, and views here and there of the wonderful "dreamy towers" of Oxford, and the curious and beautiful blue-grey tint of the shadows and the distance, which to me is characteristic of and peculiar to Oxford. There is, further, the possible development of a walk into a raid on the wild flowers in one of the woods near, but somehow these things do not attract me to-day. Some one suggests that I might join a party of one or two who are going, under the charge of a responsible chaperon, to watch the cricket match on the University Cricket Grounds in the Parks; but I feel that, though cricket is undoubtedly a splendid game, I want to do something more active than watching other people running about and getting exercise.

I know what I will do. There is the boat belonging to the Hall on the Cherwell; the river is looking perfect this afternoon, the thorn bushes on the banks, and the sweet-scented irises and water forget-me-nots in the shallows will be coming out, and there is just time to get a good stretch up to Water Eaton and back before afternoon tea. I go at once to collect a crew who combine the two requisites of being able to row, the necessity for which is sufficiently obvious, and also have got a certificate duly signed by some competent person to the effect that they can swim fifty feet, without which the authorities of the Hall will allow no student to boat. Having found two friends who are properly qualified, we proceed to the boat-house, run the boat out, and bend to our oars as we proceed up this pretty but not very often explored river. We pass the lines of

willows on the banks all bursting into leaf ; we have to stoop our heads as we go under the wire that is stretched across the river at Marsden Ferry, and before very long the picturesque old manor house at Water Eaton comes in sight, standing among the venerable apple-trees of the orchard, and looking as if it might be the scene of I know not what romance, with its little chapel by its side, its lichened wall and mullioned windows. We have not come here, however, for archæology or romance, but for exercise, and that we appreciate as only those can who are working hard, and have but a short time to get the crook caused by bending over books all day out of their backs. Now it is time to put the boat about and go home ; so round we go, and soon are speeding down the windings of the river, meeting a few undergraduates in skiffs or canoes, and now and then a Don rowing some ladies in a boat as safe and steady as ours. We house the boat and return to the Hall in time for tea—the meal at which the greater part of the entertaining we indulge in takes place. I am engaged to go to two tea-parties in different rooms this afternoon, so my stay at each must be brief.

My first hostess has only a "Hall" party, and the company has not yet all assembled, as some have not come back from an afternoon lecture at the Association Rooms, and some have gone to a tutor for private coaching and have not yet returned. Tea begins early, however, because a couple of guests are going to the afternoon service at the Cathedral, so they will have to hurry away very soon. The late comers drop in by degrees, and we are all very friendly and easy ; in fact the conversation might perhaps be considered a little more animated than would be suitable in a more mixed company. It is even possible that, as much tea is being consumed, and cakes and biscuits are rapidly disappearing, some "shop" is talked. It is a thing I never can understand, why the fact that one particular subject interests all the company present very much indeed, should be considered a sufficient reason for that subject being tabooed. There is no use attempting to deny that the rapidly approaching Examinations occupy our minds very largely, and, though the prospect does not at this moment seem to be seriously affecting any one's spirits, if we can judge by the merriment around me, still we are liable to fits of deep dejection when we realize the position, and therefore we are very glad to be merry on occasions like the present one.

My hostess has a passion for flowers, and has made her room look and smell almost like a conservatory. The number of

flowers gives one at first sight an impression that there is no possible room to work here, far less to sleep or dress ; this illusion is further strengthened by the apparent absence of a bed, that useful article of furniture being completely disguised by a large fur rug and some oriental-looking cushions.

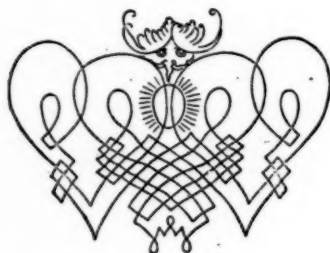
I have shortly to quit this social gathering, as I have promised to go to tea in another room. Here I find an entertainment of a slightly more formal character, as one or two ladies from outside the Hall have been invited. Tea-parties form the way in which we commonly return the hospitality we enjoy from friends outside the Hall ; and consequently a good many small tea-parties are given, especially during the May term, when Oxford hospitality is at its height.

My new hostess has decorated her room in a style quite different from that of the former one. Not many screens or knick-knacks are to be seen, but on the walls hang a few good engravings, the contents of several well-filled book-shelves give evidence of a tolerably wide range of reading outside the subjects studied for the schools, and a little colour is introduced here and there by a piece of oriental embroidery for a table-cover, and a handsome Indian rug thrown over the bed. As only what we might call the bare bones of the furniture of the rooms is provided by the Hall, each room displays a good deal of the character of its occupant by the style in which it is decorated. Tea began at four o'clock, and now by half-past five the last guests have departed, and everybody in the Hall has gone or is going to her own room for a couple of hours' work before supper. The hospitable people who have given tea-parties must be excepted, as they now have to set to work to wash up their tea-things—an occupation which doubtless is very useful but by no means amusing, and which forms the penalty that has to be paid when one entertains one's friends here.

On two days in the week a bell summons half the Hall to the Library at seven o'clock for a Divinity Class, which is held by the Lady Principal. In this way everybody attends once a week ; and many are the difficulties which have been explained, and the new lights thrown upon things that puzzled us, as we go carefully through some book in the Bible, or study some subject which perhaps we have never before thoroughly understood.

I have now gone through the history of four-and-twenty hours at our Hall at Oxford, and this, with some variations, is repeated day by day. It is not a very exciting or stirring life, but it is

full of occupation and interest to us ; it affords us the opportunity of making true and, I hope, life-long friendships ; it opens out to most of us realms of thought and study which at home would be entirely closed. The life is so much of a family life, that I think we go home all the more ready to take our places there, and to do all we can for each other. Altogether I speak only what I know when I say that nearly all of us will look back upon these two or three years spent at Oxford with thankfulness as being one of the happiest, the most useful, and the best mental growing times of our lives.



An Excursion to Finland.

A LAND of water, wood, and stone. A land of never-ending lakes, stretching on one to the other by narrow channels, broad peaceful streams and rushing torrents, and bearing in their midst innumerable islands, some clothed with trees, others but naked rocks, over which the waves may wash in stormy weather; still and silent lakes that break with curious creeks and long narrow reaches into the melancholy shores, where the endless forest descends in sad monotony to the stony water's edge. Drooping birches and sombre pines follow each other in mournful succession, hiding the huge granite boulders that lurk among them, already half concealed by soft moss and lichen, and giving a sheltering shade to the stunted bushes, the wild raspberries and tiny strawberries that thrive on the ungrateful soil.

Here and there, where the soil is deeper, the obstructing stones have been cleared away, and the hard-toiling Fin raises a scanty crop of grain, or hangs the small pitiful shocks of hay upon many forked stakes of pine, so they may swing in the air and dry, in spite of the inclement weather. At all times a hard and barren land, but in the winter doubly hard and barren, when the broad waters become sheets of ice, and what scanty herbage there is, lies hidden beneath the deep snow. In those days, should the harvest of the preceding year have failed, the misery of the peasant population is terrible. The rough wooden shanties that make up their homesteads give them shelter sufficient, and warmth can be plentifully obtained with such an abundance of fuel around them; but what are warmth and shelter without food, when even the coarse black bread can no longer be made, and one is driven to eat the very moss on the ground or the bark of the young birch trees? Fortunately, such famines are of rare occurrence to-day, but in many districts it has happened more than once that a full quarter of the population has died of sheer hunger and starvation.

Nevertheless, there are few more pleasant countries wherein to pass the summer months, few which offer to an artist more beautiful and varied scenery of wood and water, or hold out better prospect of fishing to an angler. Fabulous are the tales of the monster trout that lie in the depths of its quiet lakes ; the rivers that drain into the Gulfs of Bothnia and Finland are said to be well stocked with salmon, and there are innumerable streams whose rapids and pools have never yet been visited by the rod, and which only wait the coming of some adventurous angler to yield as rich a spoil as any of those of Norway. How the adventurous angler is to get there it is beyond my knowledge to suggest. He might find his way from Stockholm to Abo, or even Ulleaborg, and explore for himself those lakes and streams that lie nearest to the coast ; in which case he would need a large supply of time and patience, and a certain knowledge of the Finnish tongue. Or he might find his way to St. Petersburg, and there perchance meet with such kind and hospitable hosts as would give him fishing on their waters in Finland ; should he be so fortunate, let him not requite their hospitality as some one did of late, who pillaged the records of the club that entertained him, and published them forth to the world, that he might invite others to share in the good fortune which he certainly had not deserved. Of myself, Vassili Fomitch, it would be useless to recount how and why I came to be fishing in Finland ; it would be easy for me to suggest that others should go and do likewise, but perhaps difficult for them to accomplish.

In the south of Finland lies the great lake of Saima ; a lake of vast extent, but so studded with islands and beset by its encroaching shores, that it nowhere presents any great expanse of water. At its southern extremity it is drained by the river Vuoksa, which flows some fifty miles sometimes in confined and raging rapids, at other times with a broad, placid stream, until it reaches the lake Ladoga. At the point where the Vuoksa leaves the Saima, perched on the high bank just above the smooth downward curve of water which the lake makes before it takes its plunge into the cataract below, is a little wooden house, the headquarters of many an enthusiastic angler. The steps and floor of its verandah are adorned with the carved effigies of the big fish that from time to time have rewarded the efforts of its inhabitants ; lake trout of various weights, from twenty-two pounds downwards, to gaze on which fills the heart

of the visitor with joy, and causes him to hurry off to the scene of action filled with a wild longing to pull out one as big for himself. As to that scene of action he has plenty of choice. He may have himself rowed about in the smooth water of the pool just above the mouth of the lake, where, if he keeps close to the dangerous edge of the river's fall, he may rejoice in any number of small trout up to two pounds, or at some hundred yards higher up, his ambition may be rewarded with a real *lokki*, as the big fish are called, a lake trout of perhaps twenty pounds; or he may row round in the tumbling waters of the river's lower pools; or, again, he may keep to the banks, and scrambling from rock to rock, choose such points of vantage whence he can throw a fly over the broken waters and smooth pools that alternate along the side, where, if he is possessed of any skill, he is pretty sure of a good bag of smaller trout and grayling.

He will do well to try all these things, and better if he fishes the river by day and reserves the lake for the quiet hour after sunset. Then he shall provide himself with trolling tackle, a trace of twisted gut with a little lead on it, by reason of the darkness, and a phantom minnow of sufficient size to attract the hungry ferox. As he is rowed gently to and fro across the pool let him let out some thirty yards of line and possess his soul in patience, and perchance his patience shall not go unrewarded. If so, let us hope he will not do as Vassili Fomitch did—but then Vassili Fomitch is not a skilful fisherman. To him within the first twenty minutes there came a *lokki*, the biggest fish that ever was *not* seen; sweetly sang the reel as the line sped out through the water. How did it happen? was it the fault of the gut at one end, or heedlessness at the other? After a brief and unequal struggle the rod straightened out and the line came home, and he was left all lamenting and ashamed to replace his broken tackle, while the *lokki* departed rejoicing in the possession of half a trace and a quite undigestible minnow for its supper.

No, I fear the fault was mine own; as Johann, my fisherman, remarked, I was not a master of the craft. Yet, even so, I managed to catch fish, and had the pleasure of seeing others do still better. Perhaps the most certain way of getting a good bag was to troll a minnow in the lower pools of the river between the rapids; there it was easy to get a dozen fair trout within the hour; but it is hard work for the fisherman pulling round in the strong eddies and currents of the rapid stream. The better part,

of course, was to work along the banks with the fly, though the birch trees growing to the water's edge made it difficult to get out a line without wading.

Of salmon there are none, and for good reason. Some two miles lower down, the Vuoksa passes through the narrow rocky passage known as the Falls of Imatra, up whose raging torrent no living fish could ascend. Below these falls salmon have been caught, and the rapids of Wallin-Koski, beyond Imatra, are considered a very likely place for big fish. Thither we made our way, driving not without much jolting in the high-wheeled springless carriole of the country, and turning aside half-way through the woods to see the Falls of Imatra. Down through a narrow chasm, cleft for more than a hundred yards through the overhanging rocks, the whole body of the river tumbles hurling headlong to the depths below. Pent in between the narrow limits of its rocky sides it rushes down, an irresistible force of smoky foam, ever trying to beat for itself a wider and smoother path, and sending up in sullen thunder its ceaseless complaint against the confinement of its banks. The shores of the pool below are strewn with curious pebbles that have been caught in the caverned bases of the rocky cliffs, and churned by the resistless eddies and whirlpools into all kinds of fantastic shapes. So great is the violence of the water, that a barrel thrown in above is splintered to matchwood before it reaches the bottom. Certainly the heart of the boldest salmon would quail at the prospect of such a passage.

The Falls of Wallin-Koski are very tame in comparison, but the scenery is pretty and the fishing said to be very good. I cannot say much from my own experience, as I caught nothing but two trout after three hours' labour. The day was very hot and bright, and there was a terrible glare on the water. For a long time I patiently fished the pool below the rapids, sometimes in the waves of the tumbling waters, at other times trying the smooth reaches, or skirting the shores—but all to no purpose. My boat, a very frail kind of skiff, leaked sadly, and every twenty minutes the fisherman had to cease from rowing, to bale it out. The sun was hot and the air heavy; perhaps I dozed, for there came to me a vision of a great *lokki* from the watery depths, who turned up his nose in infinite contempt as he mocked me. "Go home, Vassili Fomitch," he said, "hast thou not troubled waters there in plenty to fish in without coming to seek them here, surely thou wilt catch nothing but

trouble for thy pains? Go home, and take thy ridiculous flies and minnows with thee! Thou wert ever a fool, Vassili Fomitch," he continued, in a confidential tone. "Thyself prone to pursue phantoms, and gape at gaudy flies; say, when didst thou last feel the hook?" and thereat the *lokki* laughed so violently that he shook the boat and dashed the water in my face with his tail, so that I opened my eyes, and behold, my fisherman was baling out again and splashing me. This time the water was ankle-deep, and we were fain to row ashore with all speed and empty the boat out. Then I took the advice of my visionary salmon and did go home; but my companion, who persevered for some hours later, returned with a fine fish of fifteen pounds. In fishing, as in all other things, *tout vient à qui sait attendre*.

Trolling a minnow in the pool of the lake above the Vuoksa was by far the most luxurious method of catching fish that I have ever practised. A comfortable seat with a back to lean against in a roomy boat, before one nothing but the water, behind one the fisherman rowing the light craft in skilful curves to and fro over the pool, slowly over the deep holes that the bait may sink, swiftly over the shallows lest it catch on the sunken rocks; nothing to do oneself but lazily move the rod to make the minnow spin, and watch the changing beauties of sky and water under the setting sun. It is to be in what the Turks call a state of *Kef*, a state of happy do-nothingness, combined with pleasant expectations. And that expectation is so often fulfilled. Out of that pool some hundreds of trout have been taken of over fifteen pounds, and some hundreds probably remain there still. It is recorded that a single rod killed more than twelve such fish in a day; beside such a splendid achievement it were better to pass over my own performance in silence. I did not do so well. Still even without the fish, it is pleasant enough in itself to be rowed about through the still hours of the evening; not a sound to be heard but the soft dip of the oar in the water behind one, and the measured beat on the rowlocks, while the golden glories of the sky and lake slowly fade away, and give place to the moon that throws a silver path from one's boat to the distant shore. Soon the moon too shall disappear, sinking behind the dark banks of the solemn pines, and then, if he be wise, the fisherman will retire also, unless he wishes to be left like Nero, "an angler in the lake of darkness."

Away northward across the lake, towards the town of Joensuu, which lies on the river Pielis, where the Pielis river flows into the Saima, draining the lake of Pielis, which lies more northward still. Thither we are summoned, partly by business, partly by the will and pleasure of Rosa Fomitchna, than whom no keener fisherwoman liveth. It is a journey of some eighteen hours, but as our little steamer is fitted up comfortably like a yacht and we have a plentiful store of provisions, we perform it by night, and care not how long it may take. The lake is picturesque enough, with its narrows and channels, wooded islets and promontories. As the night draws in, the little boat, throwing up myriads of red sparks from its wood furnaces, leaves a blazing comet's tail behind it. It is already dark when we pass the fortress of Nyslott, and we retire to our cabins and wake next morning to see the Pielis river, and the quay of Joensuu.

Joensuu, without being a very large or populous town, has an air of clean prosperity and a fair number of good houses. It was more full of people than usual when we arrived, as one of its annual fairs was in progress and the streets were filled with peasants who had come in from the neighbourhood to make their purchases. In a square beside the public garden were erected booths for the sale of such miscellaneous articles as leather harness, cotton handkerchiefs, brass kettles, cow-bells, and spinning-wheels. The people thronged to and fro from stall to stall, jostling each other without ceremony, and evidently unused to finding themselves so crowded by their neighbours. The Fins are a quiet and orderly race as a rule, though they have the reputation of being passionate and vindictive on occasion, and rather prone to the use of the knife. One saw but little drunkenness, and what there was, was chiefly confined to the young lads. Even they got drunk after a sober fashion, so to speak, and when helpless, were carried off on some friendly back, content and unresisting. There was but one amusement, a huge merry-go-round on which one could ride at the giddiest of speed to the inspiring strains of a grind-organ. The elder men solemnly took their diversion on it, gravely smoking their pipes and bestriding their hobby horses as they went round and round—that is the great drawback of most hobbies that one is doomed to ride them in a circle and get no “forrader.”

The principal business of the day, however, was the horse fair. Finnish ponies have a great reputation; the best of them are

strongly-built cobs, fairly fast, not bad looking, and excellently suited for draught purposes, but a sorrier set of nags than those exhibited at Joensuu I have not often seen. The prices set on them were not exorbitant and a good many appeared to change owners. One burly Fin seemed moved to much grief by the sale of his steed ; with his arms clasped round its neck he poured forth his lamentations, bellowing out his sorrow with most mournful energy, and fondling with uncouth gestures of affection his favourite's head. The scene was grotesque enough were it not for its touch of pathos. Whether indeed his grief was all genuine or partly the result of the softening effect of *vodka*, I know not. I fear, though, that *vodka* had something to do with it, for I saw him kick the poor beast most unkindly in the ribs by way of winding up his eloquence.

They are a simple race the Fins. Living upon very little, even that little can only be obtained by the hardest of toil. Among them there are but few wealthy or even well-to-do men. Yet from all accounts it would appear that there are at least three ways by which rapid riches may be acquired in Finland. The easiest method is to distil *vodka*, and then by occult practices break the laws that strictly forbid its retail in small quantities. Another is to pose as a philanthropist in the time of a famine ; buy on credit large quantities of grain from the government for the relief of your distressed fellow-countrymen, and then distribute it among the starving peasantry, merely taking in exchange mortgages on their woods and houses, by which means their necessity becomes your gain, and you will have the charitable satisfaction of relieving their immediate wants and reaping a rich harvest for yourself in the future. The third way, less practicable nowadays, is to seduce or kidnap the peasants across the frontier and so provide recruits for the Russian army ; thus you will benefit them by placing them in an honourable profession, and benefit yourself by receiving so much a head for your pains. By following any one or all of these methods one may acquire sufficient wealth to enable one to build as large and ugly a house as any Fin could desire, and enjoy the envy and esteem of one's fellow-citizens.

Our fishing quarters at Puntarin-Koski were not far distant from Joensuu ; a wild desolate valley filled with huge stones that had been left there by the flood which had devastated it. Simo, the fisherman belonging to the lodge, was waiting in readiness for our arrival, and we immediately put together our

rods and went forth to try our luck in the water. Simo's son attached himself to me as a guide, a barefooted little urchin with a bright intelligent face, and a tongue that never stopped prattling. He was eager to show me all the likely places for a big fish and very anxious I should catch one, but he was doomed to be disappointed. In the small upper pools between the numerous falls of the river some small trout were caught, but not a single big fish was moved; down below, where the river widened out into a broad smooth stream, the grayling were rising freely and with them I was more lucky. On the whole, none of the party did very well; but it was certainly rather late in the season, and we were content to have provided ourselves with a plentiful dinner of fish, beginning with a fish-soup, in the making of which Simo's wife displayed the talent of a real artist.

Late in the evening one of the party went out and returned with the information that the night was as dark as pitch, and fit for the deed we had to do. Whereupon we all sallied forth, scrambling painfully over the rocks and boulders through a darkness that one could almost feel, making our way down to a point on the river where a ruddy glare was thrown upon the overhanging cliffs. What were we going to do? Could we not be satisfied with fishing all day that we must needs go poaching at night? No, we would not really poach, we only wanted to look and see for ourselves if there were any fish in those pools or not. Up the current of the river the boat ascended slowly, laboriously punted up the broken rapids and eddying pools, or dragged over the rocks beside the falls. At one end of it a rough brazier, filled with burning pine wood, projected over the prow, shedding a weird unholy light over the wild rocks and waters of the torrent and lighting up the evil-looking countenances of Simo and his brother. The former grasped a rude spear with jagged iron points, by which he helped to steady the boat while the other punted it in and out of the eddies. Between them I took my seat, crouching in the bottom of the skiff while I peered with shaded eyes into the water. Every rock, every hole and cranny under the hurrying stream could be clearly seen; more than once the practised hand of Simo could have made sure of striking a heavy fish, but he withheld it, for we promised ourselves that we would catch them by more legitimate means on the morrow. Every now and then, when both poles were lifted at once, the furious velocity of the torrent would drive the

boat grinding on the rocks of the shallows, or spin it round, enclosing one in a circle of fire. There was a wonderful fascination about the proceeding, even apart from the general charm of poaching.

Next day, after fishing the falls again, we were induced to pull up the river to the little lake out of which it flows. Big fish had been caught there in former years, but, as the Spanish proverb has it, *no hay pájaros en los nidos de antaño*, "there are no birds in last year's nests,"—nor fish in last year's haunts, and we were obliged to return to Joensuu with a very modest bag. Simo followed us thither two days later with six trout, the smallest of thirteen pounds, which had fallen a prey to his wiles—but then Simo was a poacher. One other attempt we made to catch fish, and that was on the river Pielis. For quiet, peaceful scenery I know of no river more beautiful than the Pielis; we ascended it for more than three hours in a steam-launch and it was difficult to know which of its banks was the most attractive to gaze upon. Beyond the wild water-fowl there was but little sign of life, save an occasional homestead with its curling blue smoke on the river bank, or the long rafts of timber that we sometimes passed, floating down to the saw-mills of Joensuu.

Felling timber and floating down the logs are the chief occupations and business of the country. A great outcry has been raised by some people against what they call the wanton destruction of the woods and consequent devastation of the country: there can hardly be wanton destruction in making use of the one product that Finland can boast; and as to the devastation, it would take centuries before tree-felling at its present rate would make any appreciable difference in the endless supply. The forests are no more likely to run short of trees than the lakes are of fish, and Tapio and Akti, ancient Finnish gods of woods and waters, need be in no fear of the depopulation of their realms. The land on both sides of the river seemed somewhat more fertile than elsewhere, and there were continual patches of emerald meadows that showed more brightly green against the dark lines of the pine woods beyond. At Kurna the river narrows into rapids, and there we stopped. A more ideal piece of water for fishing cannot be imagined, but we caught no big fish there, though one of our party succeeded in moving one which he estimated at over ten pounds; so we soon exchanged our rods for the sketch-book, making most unsuccessful attempts to transfer to paper the scenery around us.

I doubt, however, whether even the most skilful artist could have done justice to the occasion, for how can one give to a picture the subtle charm and beauty born of murmuring sound?

Soon we had to leave Joensuu, embarking on our little steamer bound for Wilmanstrand, and from there the Finnish railway, the slowest of its kind in all the world, took us back to St. Petersburg. Leaving Finland after a short visit was a matter of real regret, but I doubt whether a very lengthy stay in the country would be pleasant. The purity of the air and the mildness of its climate during the summer makes life there a real pleasure, and as long as one is not far from its towns, most of the necessities of life can be procured. To any one who could be satisfied with an unvarying diet of fish and black bread, accompanied by the best cream and butter that can be found anywhere, it would be easy to satisfy his wants in any part of the country. How the cream and butter comes to be so good is a mystery to me, for assuredly the Finnish cows are the worst and most scantily fed of their kind. What other cow that respected herself would be satisfied with hay soup in which the water formed so unfair a proportion to the hay? The most meagre-looking hay, mixed with the dried branches of alder, simmers in a huge iron pot, and one sees the poor beasts dipping their noses into the unsavoury broth, and fishing out its soddened contents with the evident relish of hunger. It was complained to me by a resident in the country, that cows could not be induced to look upon sawdust as the staple of their food. How far he had seriously made the trial I do not know; but should he ever succeed, there will be a rich prospect for Finland in dairy-farming.

Honestly, I do not think I would advise a very enthusiastic fisherman to choose Finland as a new field for his sport. That some of the best trout-fishing in the world can be had there is undeniable, but as yet there is but little known of it, and what fishing there is known is all strictly preserved, and he might find some difficulty in profiting by it. It is likely that other untried streams would yield as good if not better sport, but Finland would hardly recommend itself as a country to explore in. After all, are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? While the magnificent fishing of Norway lies so close to us, it would be unwise to advise any one to stray further a-field.

The fishermen at the mouth of Lake Ladoga practise a method

of fly-fishing which is worthy of notice. Two rods, short rough sticks, project over the stern of the boat ; to one end of them is attached a piece of twine, ending with some three yards of gut, and a fly of home manufacture, to the other end a stout cord and a large billet of wood. The fisherman then rows himself backwards and forwards over the water, pushing the end of the sticks with his feet to make the fly play. Should a salmon take the bait, he promptly throws the whole tackle with the billet of wood overboard, takes in his other line, and leisurely follows in the track of the billet as the salmon tows it through the water, stirring up the fish until it is completely exhausted. As a rule, I believe, the fish gets away with some portion of the line, but I suppose they must be sometimes successful or they would hardly go on doing it. The only salmon that I saw caught by the line on the Ladoga was not caught by such primitive means. At the point where the Neva flows out of the Ladoga it makes an island, on which is built the fortress of Schlüsselburg, used for the occupation of Nihilists and other political prisoners before they are drafted off to Siberia. Just above the fortress is a favourite fishing-place, and here we had vowed to ourselves that we would get a salmon by fair means or foul, for only one salmon had ever been caught on a line there to our knowledge. We began our operations early in the morning, and fished long without success. Towards the afternoon I had already abandoned the fly for a phantom minnow and was pulling in perch by the dozen—some very good fish among them—when a shout from the other boat told me that my companions had something big on, and I saw the rod of Rosa Fomitchna bent almost double with its weight. Twice the fish threw itself wildly out of the water, and she knew that she had to deal with a salmon of nearly twenty pounds. A single-handed fly-rod, with barely sixty yards of line on the reel, seemed to give all the odds in favour of the fish—the more so that, though close to the fortress, we could not land on the island under penalty of being shot down by the nearest sentry. The poor salmon, however, had to fight against the coolest head and lightest hands that ever controlled a rod. Slowly and gradually he was worked towards the distant shore and into shallow waters, and after more than half an hour's struggle the gaff lifted out of the water a clean run salmon of eighteen pounds. With that triumph it were well to end my tale.

VASSILI FOMITCH.

A Counsel of Perfection.

BY LUCAS MALET.

AUTHOR OF "COLONEL ENDERBY'S WIFE," "MRS. LORIMER," ETC.



CHAPTER X.

"Les grands abattements suivent les grands enthousiasmes."

THE small-hooded carriage, in which Dr. Casteen was wont to take his daily drive, met Lydia at Bishop's Marston station. Rosencrantz,—the little red *dachshund*—prancing and pawing, upsetting himself, in the overflowings of canine rapture, upon the slippery strips of oil-cloth marking narrow passage ways across the oak flooring, and picking himself up again with manifold gruntings and excited patterings—met her in the hall. Mrs. Cunningham, wiping her hands and arms, which were somewhat floury—it being baking day—emerged from the kitchen passage, and beamed a very hearty and comfortable welcome upon her. The parlour-maid beamed upon her mistress too—trying, however, at the same time to ignore the presence of the portly housekeeper; there being a standing quarrel between these two excellent servants, each of whom wished to imagine herself indispensable to the comfort of her mistress.

Miss Casteen, however, being unaware of their unhappy divisions; being tired by her long journey; being rather anxious as to her reception by her father; being rather anxious, too, lest the Lydia Casteen who had just returned to the white rectory house, and its quiet, book-pervaded atmosphere, should prove an inconveniently different person to her who had left it less than a month ago—Miss Casteen, I say, was glad enough to see the kindly face of the large motherly woman. She asked one or two questions about the general well-being of parish and household, and then enquired where she should find her father.

"The master had been out walking for an hour in the garden. He had come in about ten minutes ago and gone into the study. He had rung for his medicine, and had given strict orders he wasn't to be interrupted till dinner. He would see Miss Casteen then."

This information was poured forth volubly by Emma, not without a side glance of triumph at Mrs. Cunningham. For once, she felt, that aggravatingly forthcoming functionary was quite out of the running.

Miss Casteen made no immediate reply or comment. She stood on the mat at the bottom of the staircase,—Rosencrantz, erect on his hind-legs in front of her, rubbing his finely modelled head and ungainly fore-paws against her knees—silent and abstracted. This was to be her reward then!—this her payment for immediate response to her father's summons!—this the equivalent for her obedience, for her instant relinquishing of pleasant companionship, brave sights, and happy days! If her father had made any departure, however small, from the iron rule of his daily habits to mark his sense of satisfaction at her home-coming, it would have been enough. Lydia's demands were not extravagant. A very slight recognition would have satisfied her. But this—

Then she remembered that the servants were looking on, and were, no doubt, drawing their own conclusions from her silence. Lydia gathered herself together; and treated her ex-nurse to a very pretty if not very cheerful smile.

"I'll come down and see you presently, Cunningham," she said. "Have my boxes taken upstairs, Emma, please. If Dr. Casteen is engaged, I may as well unpack them at once."

But Lydia did not display much energy in unpacking. Once in her own bed-chamber, she stood still and looked round it, a strange sense upon her of seeing it all, familiar as the aspect of it was, for the first time. It was spotlessly fresh and clean, upholstered according to her dainty, if somewhat timid taste, in faint colours. She glanced at the dove-coloured carpet and spindle-legged chairs,—the seats of them covered with cretonne upon which white birds were busily engaged in tying themselves together with bows of white ribbon, upon a grey ground. Glanced at the white toilette-table, whereon the housemaid had set a jar of pale late-flowering roses; at the bullfinch hanging in his cage in the southern window. The bird was dull; he sat on his perch, all his feathers fluffed out, crooning a sad little song to

himself. He had forgotten her and made no sign of joy at her approach. Then she glanced at the white bed, on which she had lain down contentedly at night, summer and winter, for so many years ; and from which she had risen, on so many mornings, to go about the work of her uneventful life.

Lydia turned away with a sigh, and sat down listlessly in the window-seat on the further side of the room, the dog jumping up beside her, and planting his big crooked paws on the inner ledge of the open window. From here Lydia looked right out into the dark horizontal branches of the cedar-trees. The afternoon was still and windless, the sky being of the blotchy reddish-grey that betokens not rain, but that peculiarly odious atmospheric condition known as blight. The far-reaching pasture lands, the great elms and the hedge-rows were dingy and colourless. The whole landscape lacked light and shade, was dim and neutral-tinted, save for the very positive blackness of the cedars in the foreground.

The space beneath these rather funereal trees was bare of grass. Under the nearer one was a single tomb—a flat lichen-stained slab of sandstone, placed as lid upon a box-like erection in brick. Against the near side of this somewhat pretentious monument Threadgold, the sexton, had rested a spade and pick. He was digging a grave near by, and the raw dirty yellow of the newly-turned earth showed conspicuously against the duller colour of the undisturbed surface beneath the cedars.

Presently Threadgold looked out over the edge of the grave above the clods of broken clay, like a mole out of the top of its hill—a stout chubby little man, blessed with a happy conceit regarding the rare quality of his tenor voice ; and blessed too with a long family of cherub-cheeked children, three of whom were now disporting themselves among the neighbouring head-and foot-stones with an admirably professional indifference to the melancholy associations of their surroundings. Having surveyed the prospect and stretched himself—the human back gets somewhat cramped grave-digging—he came, with an air of unadulterated cheerfulness, up out of the sepulchre and put on his coat.—It was an old one of Dr. Casteen's. Lydia remembered bestowing it on him a year ago. His wife, a thrifty woman, had subsequently managed to secure a good half-yard of broad cloth, and at the same time to mitigate the too purely ecclesiastical aspect of the garment by cutting short the tails of

it. The sexton's appearance when wearing it was, consequently, very suggestive of a comfortable robin without a tail.—He proceeded to shoulder his spade and pick, called those representatives of his brood of small robins present,—who came hopping after him over the graves and rank grasses merrily enough,—and uplifting his rather rawney voice in the fine old tune of *Rockingham*, marched away in the direction of the lych-gate on the far side of the churchyard.

This homely scene Lydia Casteen had watched with a sort of vacant attention. She was weary in body, sick at heart, hurt, disappointed. As the gate slammed to and the children's gay voices died away in the distance, she had a moment of extreme weakness. She leaned her cheek against the dog's smooth neck, as he stood up by her looking eagerly out of window. The hot tears came into her eyes, and she did not try to check them. It was all so lonely, so sad, so tame, and sombre and dreary. It seemed to her, in the face of her father's chill indifference and apathy, that her hasty return had been indeed a work of supererogation; and that she had been guilty of the folly of being righteous overmuch—against which special order of folly there exists, as we know, a brief but emphatic prophetic warning.

"He is selfish," she sobbed. "He is selfish. And he will never change. He will never understand what I have given up for him."

Poor Lydia's tears fell faster. For all the cruel longing of a love that wept for want and hunger, and could not be satisfied, cried out within her. She was called upon to sacrifice so much—her individual hopes and cravings. Called upon to mutilate her personality so as to fit it into a mould altogether too narrow and small for it. Yet Lydia believed she could have done this. Done it, if not gladly, at least with a chastened sweetness of resignation, if only her action had met with recognition, with ever so little of tenderness and gratitude—if only the priest, as he handled the knife, had praised, ever so slightly, the willingness of the victim.

That was the refrain of all her thought. If her father had only seemed pleased—had only seemed to care, all would have been comparatively easy. But the little dumb beast here, who licked her wet cheek and her hands, in fussy ebullitions of distressed bewilderment, had really more kindness of heart, more sympathy and pity than her father. The study door was

shut against her ; and the dim-eyed old scholar within went on methodically, cold-bloodedly pursuing his self-appointed tasks in absolute heedlessness of her coming, resentful merely at her ever having ventured to leave him, or rather leave the work which was, in truth, far dearer to him than himself ;—dependent upon her, yet thanklessly excluding her.

Was it wonderful that Miss Casteen, gentle and affectionate-natured as she was, should break down for once, and cry a little ;—cry for regret of a past that had been so strangely sweet ; and for sorrow over a present that seemed so singularly fruitless and barren ?

The sense of her father's unwarrantable callousness still possessed her when, some hour and a half later, having changed her dress, Lydia went down to the dining-room. She had mastered her emotion. She had decided to be perfectly passive. If advances were to be made, they must come from the other side. She went and stood beside her own chair at the head of the table. The candles, in deference to the condition of Dr. Casteen's eyesight, were as yet unlighted. The evenings began to close in. And upon the evening in question the blight-covered sky made the twilight both early and dense, so that the long dining-table under its white cloth, seemed to float ghostly in the centre of the dusky room.

Lydia stood for some minutes at the head of the table, her nerves in a growing condition of painful tension. She tried to harden herself. But her heart beat fast, and her sense both of sight and hearing seemed preternaturally acute. She heard the click and long-drawn creak of the study door as it opened. Then shuffling, uncertain footsteps travelling slowly down the matted passage ; becoming more distinct as they drew nearer ; slipping a little upon the oil-cloth in the hall. Then the tall bowed black figure in the doorway, the high narrow pale forehead with the dark bar across it blotting out the eyes.—

Dr. Casteen steadied himself by one hand against the door-post, and kept the other spread out before him till, with a nervous groping movement, it grasped the corner of the side-board. And there he paused.

I do not claim for Miss Casteen the distinction of being a strong-minded woman. So far she had watched motionless and in silence. But something in that groping gesture, in the feebleness and helplessness of the old man's movements, melted

all her hardness, choked, in an outrush of instinctive pity, her spirit of injury and of revolt.

She came swiftly across the room.

"Here, dear papa. I am here. I have come back to you. Let me lead you," she said, taking his thin wrinkled hand in her soft warm one, and placing it very gently upon her arm.

"Thank you, my love. I will not deny that your assistance is grateful to me," Dr. Casteen returned, with his slow carefully modulated enunciation.

That was all. With that brief offer of service, and brief acceptance, Lydia Casteen gave way, took up the burden once more; quietly, and without further struggle or remonstrance, riveted her own chains.

The meal was a silent one. Dr. Casteen asked no questions, proffered no information. When it was finished, Lydia conducted him back to the study again; ordered the shaded lamp, so as to spare his eyesight, sat down in her accustomed place at the writing-table, opened a heavy folio as directed, and gave herself up to the theological difficulties—and, oh dear me! what a number of difficulties it had—of the early Church, as of old.

The Casino at Interlaken, the wild ring of the Venus music, the snows of the Jungfrau, life, joy, movement, laughter, and—and that rather unworthy and irresponsible writer of pretty little verses—Antony Hammond—they all seemed far, extremely, incredibly, hopelessly far away!

CHAPTER XI.

. . . "le mal n'est jamais que dans l'éclat qu'on fait.
Le scandale du monde est ce qui fait offense,
Et ce n'est pas pécher que pécher en silence."

Some observer of the ugly little habits of the race, inspired more by a cynical love of scientific veracity than by a very tender love of his neighbour, has left it on record that "out of sight," in the great majority of cases, is likewise "out of mind."

The last words Antony Hammond said to Lydia Casteen, when he took leave of her on the station at Interlaken, had been:—

"Well, then, I really may run down? It is immensely good of you to let me, Miss Casteen. I expect to be in England by the end of next week at latest. Thank you a thousand times

for not condemning me to say anything worse than *au revoir* to you this morning."

Mr. Denison had listened to this address with mixed feelings. Visions of duty, it need hardly be stated, arose before him. The duty, first, of giving the speaker a bit of his mind—that gift usually so exceedingly agreeable to the receiver of it. Secondly, the possibly contingent duty of giving him a sound thrashing; for the good man's imagination still played about the handle of a horse-whip. Thirdly, the duty of warning Miss Casteen of the great risk an intellectual woman, possessed of a mind capable of grasping abstruse economic questions, would certainly run in allying herself to a minor poet, who took life and its manifold responsibilities in such a lamentably light and airy spirit. For Mr. Denison's appreciation of the lesser arts was radically defective. Why any reasonable being should ever want either to write or read small *jeux d'esprit* or playful *vers de société*, he could not for the life of him comprehend. Of pictures, devoid of any direct historical or topographical teaching, he had the most limited appreciation; while he even derived a mild pride from the fact that he had never been able to distinguish one tune—all music with Mr. Denison came under the head of tunes—from another. From every point of view, then, he felt not only justified in keeping, but absolutely bound to keep, his eye on Antony Hammond; prepared alike to fall upon him if he did and if he did not afford Miss Casteen an opportunity of refusing him.

Hammond, meanwhile, was supremely unconscious of these designs against his peace of mind and body. He was very well pleased with himself. He had felt most agreeably sentimental at parting with Miss Casteen. He missed her pretty looks and ways, and the refined drama of her personal history, quite actively. So actively, in fact, that when towards the end of next day Janie Hammond arrived, in company with her aunt, Miss Cumberbatch, and the athletic Assistant Inspector, he talked to that enthusiastic maiden about Lydia Casteen for an inordinate length of time. The young girl was admirably sympathetic. And the Inspector, kicking his naily heels upon the hotel verandah while his sweetheart was having this private interview with her brother—from which she eventually descended very pink as to the cheeks and moist as to the eyes, declaring that "it was really too nice; everything seemed to be going on so smoothly and beautifully"—the Inspector, I say, began to vote all men in love, save

himself, a most atrocious nuisance ; and to reflect—for he was a bit of a prig, perhaps—on the singular habit our most cherished delights have of changing colour, chameleon-like, when they happen to be possessed by any other than our precious selves.

Two days later Hammond, his aunt, his sister, and his sister's lover rumbled off in the big *berline*, along the noble Beatus road to Thun, *en route* for Berne and England. Mr. Denison felt relieved in one way, yet only the more annoyed in another. Hammond was really in earnest, then ! It seemed likely that his love of duty would be exercised, after all, not in using the whip, but in warning the lady.

But as ill-fortune would have it, that evening, while Hammond was lounging upon one of the sofas in the great central hall of the Thunerhof, he caught sight of a striking female figure, with a very unmistakable abundance of blonde hair. Hammond watched for a few seconds without moving, sensible of receiving that delicate artistic satisfaction which the sight of a well-dressed woman, perfectly finished from the cut of a shoe-bow to the curve of an eyebrow, can hardly fail to produce in civilized man.

Madame Cyfveer was still evidently only convalescent. She walked rather languidly, and had thrown on a long loose steel-coloured plush overcoat, edged with silver-fox fur, over her gown. All this lady's garments and all her movements were full of intention. Hammond, looking at her, felt that she was far more interesting than of old. She had gained a great deal in the way of quiet insolence and *aplomb* since the transitional period down in Kensington. It struck him that she presented a very large surface, so to speak, to the imagination. He got up, went and spoke to her.

She received him without any show of surprise. In these days Madame Cyfveer had ceased to be enthusiastic. She cultivated a slight weariness of bearing ; and a superb calm, to which her very large light-grey eyes lent themselves extremely well.

Madame Cyfveer's languor, however, whether real or assumed, did not prevent her being a remarkably agreeable companion. She and Hammond spent a very pleasant evening in each other's society. She proved several things to him beyond controversy ; amongst others that it would be entirely superfluous for him to attend his aunt and sister upon their journey through to Calais on the morrow.

"Surely that great and good man, with the great voice, and the great boots, is sufficient escort for two such little women?" she said, looking at him from under her heavy eyelids. "In point of fact you are altogether *de trop*; you are fifth wheel to the coach. They would be infinitely happier without you. If you are not there, the aunt will sleep, then the lovers will hold each other's hands and deliver themselves, probably, of other discreet caresses. If you are there, she will keep awake, thus rendering the caresses impossible. Think how very tiresome. Then, too, I had supposed that you wished to see me."

Madame Cyfveer said the last few words slowly and without the smallest trace of archness. Hammond longed to applaud, for she really said them capitally. She had the gift of style in conversation. She was very mature. Decidedly, as he soon found himself reflecting, she had not a trace of Miss Casteen's divine crudity. He qualified it as divine, and that not in irony; yet he was aware that he expanded, that he experienced a certain sense of relief, in the presence of his present companion. The divine crudity had been disconcerting and hampering at times. For there were such a number of subjects of which it had been impossible to speak to, or even before, Miss Casteen. With Madame Cyfveer the practice of such conversational reticence was quite uncalled for. She produced in him a most comfortable security.

And then—for Hammond gave the matter his best attention—he went on to perceive that really he owed himself a little moral holiday. For he was aware that Miss Casteen had drawn rather heavily upon his better nature. From another quarter his aunt, and his sister and her unimpeachably virtuous Inspector, drew rather heavily upon it too. Hammond, sitting beside Madame Cyfveer in the hall of the Thunerhof, began to wonder whether these constant demands might not speedily become dangerous? Whether the capital owned by his better nature was not in risk of being exhausted—whether the drafts made on it might not eventually be dishonoured, and returned marked "no account?" Hammond did not care to go through the bankruptcy court in that way. It would be only prudent to draw up in time.

So next morning, at breakfast, he announced a change of plan to his sister. Being abroad, and the weather still being so delightful, it seemed a pity to go back to England just yet.

"It is all that horrid woman," Janie Hammond said.

—She had always entertained a deep, unreasoning, feminine detestation of Madame Cyfveer.—

Hammond laughed at and coaxed her. He only meant to stay a little while ; really quite a little while—a week, say. But Janie Hammond refused to be coaxed. Those many other affairs of the heart, of which she was cognizant and which she had so determinately refused to remember, ranged themselves before her. Was this affair—it had seemed so full of promise—was this going to end in smoke like all the rest? The young girl began to cry.

She did more. On meeting Madame Cyfveer in the hall just as the party were starting for the station—Hammond was putting Mrs. Cumberbatch into the omnibus, while the Inspector looked after the baggage,—Janie Hammond turned upon her, as valiantly as a mouse in a corner, though she knew that her eyes were deplorably red.

"You don't know how much harm you are doing. It is very wrong of you to keep my brother. He ought to go home."

"Why ought he go?" the lady enquired calmly.

"Because he has made acquaintance with some one whom he likes very much—who would make him very happy. She has gone back to England. She expects him. He ought to go too."

"Oh, that is it, is it?"

Madame Cyfveer folded her arms and smiled down at the girl.—That is to say her lips smiled ; Madame Cyfveer's large light-grey eyes had a disagreeable habit of never smiling.

"Your brother stays to please himself, my dear Janie, not to please me," she said, speaking indulgently, as to some fretful child. "I am sorry though that it annoys you. And it is really charming of you to be so hotly anxious about his happiness. But we are old friends, he and I ; and in some ways perhaps I know him better than you do. Believe me, it is rather a waste of your kind little heart to expend it in anxiety about him. He will never come to any great harm. But he will always continue to please himself. And no one will ever persuade him to do anything which fails, or has ceased, to please him."

"How I wish you had not been here! It is your fault. How I wish we had never met you!" the girl exclaimed.

Madame Cyfveer arranged her bangles, from one of which depended a tiny diamond pig—she had beautifully turned wrists—and slightly raised her pale eyebrows.

"Ah, no doubt it was unfortunate," she said. "But then so many things are unfortunate. Your eyes will be permanently disfigured, my dear child, if you permit yourself to cry over all of them. There, there, they are calling you. I must not delay you as well as the precious brother. *Bon voyage*. He will be back in plenty of time for the wedding. He will come to no harm."

And so it came about that, while Lydia Casteen rose or went to rest in the faint-tinted bedchamber overlooking the churchyard; improved her acquaintance with the endless aberrations of the religious mind during the first five centuries of the Christian era in the dimly-lighted library; or went softly through her simple duties in household and parish—her mind, meantime, haunted by the remembrance of the enchanted spring-time of her brief romance,—the man who formed the centre of those happy memories, whom she longed to see once again with an ever-deepening longing, was entertaining himself vastly by stepping about the European Continent in company with fair-haired Madame Cyfveer. For unquestionably it is the way of the world, as well as a law of things spiritual, that to those who have shall be given; and from those who have not, shall be taken away the little they might have supposed themselves to have. Judged from the worldly and amatory standpoints, Miss Casteen did not own much, while her rival owned a good deal. So what more natural, than that this rather irresponsible bit of humanity, Antony Hammond, should be taken from the first and given to the second?

He was not so given and taken, however, without a sharp struggle.

For it happened one afternoon towards the close of October, when the range of the Savoy Alps on the far side of the Lake of Geneva looked as though it had been carved out of a single amethyst, and the vineyards of the *Côte* behind sloping towards the southern sun, though stripped of their purple clusters still boasted a sprinkling of yellow and scarlet leaves—it happened that Mr. and Mrs. Denison, with a lady's maid, a valet and a stack of luggage in the background, found themselves waiting on the landing-stage at Ouchy for the steamboat to Montreux. They had left Interlaken some weeks previously, and were moving slowly southward, having decided to spend the winter on the Riviera, as Mr. Denison had now no parliamentary duties to claim his presence at Westminster.

Mrs. Denison was a victim to *ennui* as she leaned against the

railing of the landing-stage. She was alone with her husband, and surrounded with exquisite scenery. It was not surprising, therefore, that her thoughts should revert to a former occasion, when she had found existence equally tedious under very similar circumstances.

"You know, Albert, I am the least, just the least bit annoyed at not having heard again from Lydia Casteen," she said. "I think she really might have written more than one rather scrappy little note, after travelling with us, being on such very affectionate terms, don't you know, and all that. I think it shows just a little, little want of appreciation of our relative positions."

"The boat is five minutes late already," put in her husband, in a tone of remonstrance.

He stood with his feet close together, and his walking-stick stuck between his knees, looking like some long, narrow, sponge-coloured invertebrate animal set up on end, while he anxiously surveyed the Genevan end of the lake through a pair of field-glasses.

Mrs. Denison arranged the brown veil,—tied over her travelling hat, and under her plump chin, glancing at her husband as she did so.

"I must own, I really was very much *intriguée* about that business between her and Mr. Hammond, you know. Of course it all began under my nose, as you may say. And I could not help being interested in it. I didn't actually wish it. You didn't wish it either, you know, Albert. But I asked nice little Janie Hammond about it that night at Interlaken, and she seemed delighted. Evidently his people wouldn't object. He had said a great deal to them, I feel sure; there must have been some understanding between them, don't you know. I think Lydia, dear and sweet as she is, was not quite as confidential with me as she might have been."

Just then, Mrs. Denison's small bright eyes, roaming about in search of some object presenting a measure of social interest, lighted upon a fashionably-dressed woman standing at the extremity of the long wooden stage, that seemed to crawl like a huge, black, many-legged insect far out over the blue water of the lake. The passengers awaiting the advent of the steamer were few; and this lady, who even in a crowded room would have commanded observation, was extremely noticeable against the wide background of undulating water, purple mountain, and fair clear sky.

"No, I really don't think dear Lydia has behaved quite nicely, not with all the consideration I should have expected," Mrs. Denison repeated, still gazing at this well-appointed figure in growing curiosity.

"No doubt Miss Casteen has been engaged. Old Casteen doesn't spare her.—It's perfectly intolerable to be kept waiting in this way. The boats ought to be forced to be up to time. Distinctly they ought to keep time."

Mrs. Denison came close to her husband and patted his arm.

"My dear good Sultan," she said confidentially, "do look at that woman with the golden hair. Of course that sort of dressing wouldn't do at home, don't you know. It is loud—just a little bit loud. But then foreigners are so different about all that sort of thing, don't you know. She's really very handsome, and distinguished looking. She must be somebody; I wonder who she is?—There at the end, with the big buttons and long coat-tails, Albert; do you see?"

It was among Mr. Denison's many small peculiarities that he greatly objected to being called upon to inspect specimens of feminine beauty presented unexpectedly, as thus, to his view. It made him feel horribly shy. He therefore twisted about a good deal before he could make up his mind to glance furtively in the quarter indicated by his wife.

"The boat is getting on for ten minutes late," he said. "It really is too bad. Or else the time-tables must be miserably inaccurate. It seems to me little short of fraudulent to— Yes, my dear Emily, I see, I see. But really, I can't stare. It is not civil to stare."

"But don't you think she is handsome? I wonder who she is! She really must be somebody, don't you know."

Mr. Denison bestowed another hasty glance, and his mild face assumed an expression of slight disgust.

"I don't think, Emily, you must pardon my saying it, but I don't think I would keep on looking in that direction quite so much if I was you. I see Johnston and Runciman are—well—are—er—observing us. And that person,—it's an offensive thing to mention such a suspicion, and I may be doing her an injustice,—but she doesn't strike me as being—well, quite respectable, in fact. An actress, perhaps—or,—you understand? I needn't explain further."

"Good gracious!" cried Mrs. Denison, staring harder than

ever. "Why, my dear Sultan, how extraordinary it is the way you men know that sort of thing at once."

She laughed in a girlish manner, secretly delighted at the manifestation of masculine shrewdness on the part of her husband.

"The Grand Lama really is very quick after all," she murmured, as though confiding edifying information to a sympathetic audience. "Ah! take care, Albert. Do look where you're going! Remember there is no railing on that side. You are so very vague in your movements, and it makes one so nervous. What is the matter?"

"Matter!" echoed Mr. Denison, with increasing disgust both of voice and manner, turning his back resolutely upon the farther end of the stage.—"Matter! Why don't you see who is with that—that person, Emily? Don't look, pray don't look. It's impossible for us to speak to him. I am sure I don't know what we are to do. Don't you see it is Hammond, Antony Hammond?"

Mrs. Denison gave a quick exclamation. Her eyelids fluttered. Of course she was scandalized; but she was also filled with a very lively sense of adventure. For she had the inevitable curiosity of a not very wise woman—who has herself been perfectly amenable to social laws and has only associated with other women equally amenable—regarding those members of her sex whose career has, unhappily, been more dramatic than discreet.

"Dear me, how very unpleasant! Imagine Mr. Hammond, of all people! When we were just talking about his feeling for poor dear Lydia Casteen, too, you know. Just fancy! How very extraordinary!"

"Now perhaps you understand why Miss Casteen has not written again, or told you more fully about that—er—matter you just now referred to," Mr. Denison said with sudden ferocity. "And I heard him myself tell her he should be back in a week at latest, and that he would go down to Marston—the—the——"

Here Mr. Denison walked away quickly towards the pile of luggage. He was very angry, very angry indeed. And he was afraid he might forget himself and make use of reprehensibly unparliamentary language before his wife.

It was just at this juncture that a pungent remark from Madame Cyfveer called Hammond's attention to the near neighbourhood

of his old friends. He felt acutely uncomfortable, for he perceived that, under all the circumstances, it would be anything but easy for him to give a satisfactory account of himself. Presumptions would, necessarily, be against him. Hammond realized that he was caught in a very awkward little trap.

And then, moreover, it sometimes happens that even the least conscientious of mortals becomes temporarily affected by the conscience of another. As Mr. Denison, having with praiseworthy determination choked down the undesirable expressions that had risen to his lips, came back to his wife's side again, Hammond saw,—as in a flash of disagreeably illuminating mental lightning,—himself and his whole course of action during the past six weeks as it must appear to that estimable, if rather wearisome, reformer. Hammond, for the moment, adopted Mr. Denison's conscience. And undoubtedly when arraigned before that highly sensitive moral tribunal, he cut a very pitiable figure.

Madame Cyfveer, meanwhile, had been watching him closely with her unsmiling eyes.

"Do you know those rather odd-looking people?" she asked.

"Yes, very well."

"Ah!" she said, slowly, "I think I apprehend the situation. They are the friends you have mentioned—the friends of the hypothetical bride."

For the moment, Hammond's face lost all its good-humour. He stood with his legs apart, his hands resting on the top of his walking-stick, looking down at the glittering water between the roughly-laid planks, in a far from enviable state of mind. Lydia Casteen's charming countenance, in its purity and unconscious dignity, her sweet gratitude, her unswerving loyalty, the noble candour, the earnestness, the calm strength of her character, came very clearly and forcibly before him. Hammond had given his better nature a holiday; and, now, the better nature arose, and confronted, and cried shame on him. At the moment he was not sure whether he hated most his wanton courting of Miss Casteen, or his subsequent and equally wanton neglect of her.

Madame Cyfveer's rather hard voice cut across this penitential meditation with a simple but pertinent enquiry.

"What are you going to do?" she said. "When you know people very well, it is usual to speak to them, isn't it?"

Hammond did not at all care that his companion should

gauge the depth of his present discomfort. He looked up smiling. And his smile possibly held in solution a grain or two of impertinence.

"Of course," he said. "But Denison, though the best fellow in the world, is a trifle difficult to deal with. He did not expect to find me here. He will put me through the longer catechism. He will demand reasons."

Madame Cyfveer raised her eyebrows.

"Indeed! Am I not reason enough?"

Hammond laughed a little.

"Enough! you are ten times too much, my dear friend. For Albert Denison, quite ten times too much."

And with that he walked down the length of black planks that divided him from his two old friends.

"This is as pleasant as it is unexpected," he said gaily. "I had no notion you were still out here. How d'ye do, Denison?"

"The Sultan, as you see, is perfectly absorbed in the lateness of the boat. He can think of nothing but the lateness of the boat. His eyes are absolutely glued to his glasses, you know."

At this indirect appeal her husband unwillingly lowered his field-glasses.

"Oh! er—Hammond," he said. "And when did you come out, come back, in fact, from England?"

Hammond had been right in fearing a catechising. He assumed an air of surprise.

"Why?" he asked. "I really haven't looked at the papers for the last day or two. Has anything particular been going on at home?"

"Emily," said Mr. Denison, "I regret very much troubling you; but I should be extremely obliged if you would just go and—er—and speak to Johnston. Just go and ask him, ask him about that time-table. In fact find out if it was—er—correct. Ask Johnston, you understand?"

He spoke very fast, frowning at her, and jerking his head with alarming but indicative violence towards the servants and the luggage.

"The Grand Lama's diplomacy is rather too transparent," Mrs. Denison exclaimed half aloud, not without a movement of provocation.

But she did as she was requested. Then the good man turned on Antony Hammond.

"Look here," he said, "it is uncommonly disagreeable to me to put myself forward, or appear to interfere in your private concerns ; but I must ask you plainly whether you have been back to England or not ?"

Hammond was keenly annoyed. But it was no use shuffling.

"No," he said, "I have not. May I enquire, in return, why you want to know ?"

Mr. Denison fidgeted almost convulsively.

"It is deeply distasteful to me to bring a lady's name into such a conversation as this. I only do it under pressure. But I am compelled to ask you, as you say you have not been back to England, whether you have had any correspondence with Mrs. Denison's and my friend, Miss Casteen ?"

"Upon my word, Denison, you go far," Hammond cried.

"I can't help that," the other man replied doggedly.

"I don't admit your right to put such a question to me," Hammond said, rather hotly.

He wanted to fence, and avoid making any direct statement. But between vexation with himself and with his interlocutor he had great difficulty in keeping his temper.

"You may not admit my right ; but I am sensible of possessing it. We are placed in an odious relation to each other. It cannot be more objectionable to you than it is to me. But I cannot shirk it. It would be wretchedly cowardly of me to do that. Miss Casteen was travelling in my wife's and my charge. We were responsible for her."

Mr. Denison drew himself up, and for once stood quite still.

"I have the very deepest and most respectful admiration for that lady," he continued. "She appears to me the ideal of all that a woman should be. I reverence both her intelligence and the beauty of her disposition. You know best, Hammond, whether your conduct to Miss Casteen has been above reproach."

He waited, as for an answer.

Antony Hammond looked away. And his eyes rested on Madame Cyfveer. She had come a few steps forward, and leant in a very graceful, well-conceived attitude, with her back against the railing. The level rays of the sun, setting behind the long purple line of the Jura, fell about her, lighting up her highly-civilized figure and the abundance of her surprisingly yellow hair. Her head was raised. She was watching Hammond with a curious concentration of purpose. She was astonishingly good-looking, just then.

Mr. Denison's eyes, for a moment, took the same direction. Then he came close up to Hammond, and said, between his teeth, in a tone of voice that gentleman had certainly never heard him employ before :—

"If you have trifled with her affections, if you have caused her any sorrow, by God! sir, it would afford me the very greatest pleasure to drop you in there"—pointing down at the dancing water—"with a good heavy stone to your feet."

"The boat, Albert. The boat. At last, the boat," cried Mrs. Denison, hurrying up, her eyelids fluttering, likewise her brown veil.

She really could not contain her curiosity any longer.

Her husband turned to her with a singular little sigh, and a vacant expression in his mild blue eyes.

"The boat—ah! exactly," he said. "We will go and stand by the luggage, please. Here, Emily, take my arm. For once I see quite plainly where I am going, my dear, so you can take it with perfect security."

It occurred to Mrs. Denison that "occasionally the Grand Lama was really very peculiar, very odd, indeed, don't you know."—

When Hammond rejoined Madame Cyfveer, that lady regarded him intently, and her lips relaxed into a doubtfully pleasant smile.

"The catechism contained questions not wholly easy to answer on the spur of the moment," she remarked. "Do you know, you don't appear to me precisely impressive just now? You remind me forcibly of a small dog that has had a beating."

"I congratulate you," he answered. "You have the knack of saying exquisitely delicate things.—Yes, I have just gone through a delicious experience. A man for whom I have a strong liking, has just intimated to me that my conduct has been more or less blackguardly ;—and, unhappily, I agree with him."

Madame Cyfveer arranged her bangles, paying special attention to the tiny diamond pig, whose legs had got entangled with the *lisse* frilling in the sleeve of her dress.

"If that is your attitude of mind, I think I may as well pack up and go back to Amsterdam. M. Cyfveer is always delighted to see me. And you are not likely to be very good company"—she looked up languidly—"for a time, I think—just for a time."

(To be concluded.)

Our Library List.

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MR. AND MRS. BANCROFT'S REMINISCENCES. (2 vols. 30s. *Bentley*.) To the theatrical world every page of these volumes will be of deep interest; the public also will enjoy the history of their old favourites' career, and renew a scarcely forgotten regret at its premature termination. Mrs. Bancroft presents a charming figure: buoyant, sanguine, shrewd, humorous, and sympathetic, ever ready to see the bright side of affairs, confessing to a slight tinge of womanly vanity perhaps, and a decided vein of popular superstition, a brilliant actress and an affectionate friend—what wonder that she took the town by storm? Of Mr. Bancroft's opinions upon things dramatic we would willingly have heard more, even had it been necessary to sacrifice some of the narrative, which plods through season after season almost too persistently, though relieved by plenty of light and entertaining reminiscences. The history of the marvellously successful Robertson Comedies—whose value Mrs. Bancroft discovered—forms one of the most interesting portions of the book.

CORRESPONDENCE OF SIR HENRY TAYLOR. Edited by EDWARD DOWDEN. (1 vol. 16s. *Longmans*.) This correspondence is of an unusually miscellaneous character. The letters are by no means all Sir Henry's, but include communications from Wordsworth, the late Sir James Stephen, Macaulay, Mr. Spedding, Lord Grey, and Mr. Gladstone. The book is an agreeable and interesting supplement to the Autobiography published in his lifetime. Sir Henry's style is not only clear and polished, but has the quality of distinction which is perhaps oftener found in French than in English compositions of this familiar kind. Sir Henry took vast care of his own mind, and watched its development with a curious mixture of detached interest and personal affection. Ease and fastidiousness, and perhaps a cultivated self-satisfaction, prevented him from ever repeating the success of Philip van Artevelde which was the work of his youth, yet a perusal of Mr. Dowden's volume will show not only that Sir Henry Taylor was respected by the best of his contemporaries, but that he never wrote anything for the public which he could have made better by more care.

THE LETTERS OF CHARLES LAMB. Edited by ALFRED AINGER. (2 vols. 10s. *Macmillan*.) Canon Ainger is nothing less than a public benefactor in giving this delightful selection of Charles Lamb's letters to the world. The two volumes are just the right size; the notes are admirably chosen and discreetly placed at the end of each volume; the arrangement as regards time, which the absence of dates and postmarks makes a matter of considerable difficulty, is a great advance on all previous editions, and above all there are a number of letters never published before. There is one, for instance, printed in the notes, because it was found too late for insertion in the text, which is a perfect specimen of Lamb's delightful attitude towards his eminent friends, his gay humour, and the way he holds his own in matters of criticism. This letter refers to "the castigation" he received from Coleridge and Wordsworth for some criticisms he ventured to make on the "Lyrical Ballads." As for the old letters, to know them is to love them. They are not only the most delightful reading possible, but also tell the story of Lamb's difficult and lonely life in a way no one but he could tell it.

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THE BLACKSMITH OF VOE. By PAUL CUSHING. (3 vols. *Blackwood*.) Christopher Kneebone is a quaint and entertaining personage; his eccentric benevolence and constant good-humour are contagious, and prevent the reader from wearying of a mystery to which he will probably find a clue in the very first chapter. There is indeed a freshness and vivacity in all Mr. Cushing's work that secures plenary indulgence for much fantastic extravagance. Ruth Boden, the heroine, is labelled as the embodiment of all the virtues. Her father refuses to sanction her marriage with Abel, a cousin, whom Mr. Kneebone takes under his wing for reasons which presently appear; on this and other matters war is waged between Kneebone and Miller Boden, ending, of course, in Kneebone's triumph. Some of the incidental episodes, such as the flood on the Scarthin and the well-decorating gala, are among the best scenes in the book.

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MAYROYD OF MYTHOLM. By JOHN DALBY. (3 vols. *Chapman & Hall*.) This novel claims to be a "Romance of the Fells," but a more thoroughly unromantic tale we have seldom encountered. Sheep-stealing, hard drinking and pugilism form the staple of a narrative eked out with still less desirable features. Mayroyd is a North-country farmer; his character displays an odd mixture of good intentions and frail actions: he is a kind of boorish Don Quixote, always tilting at windmills, often smarting for his pains, and ending pretty much where he began. Of the medley crowd that fills the three volumes in confused disorder not a single member aroused our interest for a moment; the author possesses a considerable knowledge of Westmoreland dialect and

obsolete manners and customs, which he does not hesitate to inflict mercilessly upon the reader.

A TEACHER OF THE VIOLIN, AND OTHER TALES. By J. H. SHORTHOUSE. (1 vol. *Macmillan*.) There are three long reprinted stories, a short one, and "An Apologue" in this volume. The "Teacher of the Violin" falls in love with a German princess, but, finding his suit impracticable, marries her lady-in-waiting. The "Marquis Jeanne Hyacinthe de St. Palaye," eponymous hero of the second story, is murdered by le Chevalier de Grissolles, for whom Mademoiselle de Frontenac reserves her affections while promising her hand to the Marquis. In the third story, the Baroness Helena von Saarfeld, to paraphrase her own words, "in violation of all the customs of her sex, offers her hand to two men, one an actor and one a noble, and is rejected by both." Then comes "Ellie," to our mind the gem of the volume, though exhibiting singular indifference to accuracy of detail. The "Apologue" may mean anything—or nothing: it only covers nine pages.

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS. By M. B. BETHAM EDWARDS. (3 vols. *Bentley*.) The very laudable object of this novel is to amuse the reader. There is no question of serious delineation, human combatings, or intricate situations. The characters are frankly burlesque, and the story borders on the farcical. But if we are spared any emotion, the writing is lively, the conversations are clever, and there is a sparkle of good spirits as well as originality throughout. There are two heroines. One, whose name is Rapha Rapham, is the refined daughter of the most vulgar parvenu fiction has ever ventured upon. There are many good touches in the description of his attitude towards his own wealth and the Midland County society he launches it into, but it would be better if the picture were more restrained. Then there is a young schoolmistress called Norrice Bee, whose beauty and wit are only equalled, by her genius as an inventress. Her character is more nearly interesting than any other in the book; but a machine for annihilating weight is too much even for admirers of Jules Verne.

